THE HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION.

By *DAVID RAMSAY*, M.D.

OF SOUTH-CAROLINA.

A NEW EDITION.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOLUME I.

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASWATI MAHAL.

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ADVERTISEMENT

BY AN

ENGLISH FRIEND.

THE TANJORE MAHARAJAH SERFOJI'S SARASWATI MAHAL.

THE particulars of the American Revolution may by many be thought to be ſufficiently known; but if we deduct from our firſt accounts all that was falſe, or that is by this time forgotten, and add all that is true which has ſince been diſcovered, the hiſtory now preſented to the Engliſh reader may be eſteemed in a great meaſure new. It is new even among the Americans; and in any event it muſt produce a new effect upon the judgement and feelings of every one, as being digeſted out of ſcattered materials. There are few indeed to whom the work will be more intereſting than to thoſe who have borne a ſhare in the events which it records; and there is no portion of modern, or perhaps ancient hiſtory, more worthy of the attention of readers at large, whether as reſpecting politics, war, or the human character.

Should the peruſal of it revive ſome of the regrets of Engliſhmen, the contemplation of our paſt misfortunes may at leaſt prove a leſſon for

avoiding the like in future; eſpecially in the preſent eventful age, when no political courſe can long be ſafe which is not framed upon principle, and ſuited both to the temper and intereſts of mankind.

The diſcovery of the diſtreſs which the Americans ſuffered at the cloſe of the war, muſt not lead us to lament the peace which followed; for the diſtreſs experienced was certainly mutual. But had it even been in our power for the moment to ſubjugate America, either terms muſt have been granted to her equivalent to independence, or elſe a perpetual cauſe of war would have remained; which, in the caſe of a ſpirited and increaſing people, muſt always have proved burthenſome on our ſide, and ſooner or later have terminated in their favour. At preſent, none can doubt that a more beneficial connection with America is open to us, than any which could have been produced by force.

The particular hiſtory before us is at once ſhort and full, as well as judicious, authentic, and impartial, and is clearly the beſt extant on the ſubject.

Some allowances nevertheleſs are requiſite in favour of the preſent work, which, from ſeveral paſſages in it, appears not to have received the author's laſt corrections. Some peculiarities of ſtyle will ſtill be found remaining, a part of which belong to the author, and the reſt to the country to which he belongs.

It is a curious fact, that there is perhaps no one portion of the British empire, in which two or three millions of persons are to be found, who speak their mother tongue with greater purity, or a truer pronunciation, than the white inhabitants of the United States. This was attributed, by a penetrating observer, to the number of British subjects assembled in America from various quarters, who, in consequence of their intercourse and intermarriages, soon dropped the peculiarities of their several provincial idioms, retaining only what was fundamental and common to them all; a process, which the frequency, or rather the universality of school-learning in North-America, must naturally have assisted. At the same time there are few natives of the United States, who are altogether free from what may be called *Americanisms*, both in their speech and their writing. In the case of words of rarer use, they have framed their own models of pronunciation, as having little access to those established among the people from whom they have derived their language; and hence they are sometimes *at variance* with us in their speech, (to say nothing of the peculiar tones of voice which prevail in some parts of the United Sates.) But their familiarity with our best writers has in general left them ignorant of nothing which regards our phraseology; and hence their chief difference in writing consists in their having *added* a few words to our language, in consequence of the influence of

ſome local authority, or of their peculiar ſitu-ation. Some of theſe additions we have ourſelves received, as in the caſe of the words " organize, and organization," when applied to political bodies; others we have liſtened to without as yet adopting, as in the caſe of the words " the legiſlative and the executive," when uſed as ſubſtantives; but others again we have altogether declined to countenance, as the words, " to advocate and to loan," which appear to be verbs invented without any apparent reaſon. The author before us will furniſh ſeveral examples of what is here alluded to, where the ſolitary authority of a few Engliſh writers, if ſuch are to be found in his favour, cannot be conſidered as of force enough to be oppoſed to the general habit of our nation. Happily, however, theſe criticiſms are of little practical uſe; for no terms can become current in either of the two countries, which will not eaſily be underſtood in both of them. It is thus that the new circumſtances of the French have brought various words into uſe with that nation, which were before unknown to it; but they are all of them immediately intelligible, whether they are borrowed from us, or from America, or like the word " *civiſme* or *inciviſme*," have originated among themſelves.

On the whole, the weſtern world will have poſſeſſed no language ſo uniform and ſo univerſal as our own is likely to be; when the Britiſh Americans ſhall once have peopled their

new

new continent, which is ſo much more extenſive than that of Europe. Before the late American revolution, the Engliſh language had acquired its ſtandard, (as far as any living language can acquire a ſtandard) and the Britiſh Coloniſts had attained a remarkable perfection in it; and conſequently there is no probability that any dialect can hereafter ariſe on either ſide, ſuch as was common in barbarous ages. Engliſhmen, then, have reaſon to be proud of the means of communication thus offered, for benefiting, upon eaſy terms, ſo large a portion of the human race; nor will they, it is to be hoped, deſpiſe the opportunity of receiving benefit in return, for it is impoſſible that a people deſcended from ſome of the beſt ſtocks in Europe, and engaged in uſeful purſuits, can fail to furniſh new ideas and new diſcoveries, like thoſe of which the immortal Franklin has given us ſo many examples. Perhaps we may look to the time when the Engliſh and French languages ſhall become the *learned* languages of all civilized nations; and, unleſs with a few neceſſary exceptions, ſhall ſuperſede the uſe of the dead languages, which are at preſent ſo imperfectly underſtood by thoſe intere[illegible] in poſſeſſing them as a vehicle of real knowledge.

It may be proper here to inform the public, that our author was born in America, and is connected by his ſecond marriage with the family of the well-known Mr. Laurens. His

Hiſtory of the Revolution of the North American States is preceded by a ſhort epitome of their colonization, and followed by the relation of ſeveral incidents which have occurred in them ſince the peace. Had the author continued his accounts a year or two later, he might have ſeen reaſon to augur favourably of his country, whoſe proſpects have recently improved, in conſequence of the univerſal obedience paid to the new fœderal government, the funding of all the American public debts, a ſyſtem of ſimple and productive taxes, the commencing operation of law, a complete reſtoration of tranquillity, a gradual reformation hoped for in manners, the rapid improvement of agriculture and arts, and the dawn of confidence opening on the part of foreign powers, who had ſeen too little cauſe to reſpect the proceedings (whether public or private) which for ſome years paſt have unhappily prevailed in the United States.

PRE-

PREFACE.

THE materials for the following ſheets were collected in the years 1782, 1783, 1785, and 1786; in which years, as a member of Congreſs, I had acceſs to all the official papers of the United States. Every letter written to Congreſs by General Waſhington, from the day he took the command of the American army till he reſigned it, was carefully peruſed, and its contents noted. The ſame was done with the letters of other general officers, miniſters of Congreſs, and others in public ſtations. It was intended to have enlarged the work by the inſertion of ſtate papers, as proofs and illuſtrations of my poſitions. This I could eaſily have done, and ſhall do at a future time, and in a ſeparate work, if the public require it. At preſent I thought it prudent to publiſh little more than a ſimple narrative of events, without introducing my authorities. Several of theſe are

already in my *Hiſtory of the Revolution of South-Carolina*,* and ſuch as are printed may be found in the periodical publications of the day. I have endeavoured to give much original matter at a ſmall expence. As I write about recent events, known to thouſands as well as myſelf, proofs are at preſent leſs neceſſary than they will be in future.

I appeal to the actors in the great ſcenes which I have deſcribed for the ſubſtantial truth of my narrative. Intentional miſrepreſentations, I am ſure, there are none. If there are any from other ſources, I truſt they will be found in ſmall circumſtances, not affecting the ſubſtance.

October 20, 1789.

* In two vols. octavo, illuſtrated with maps. Printed for John Stockdale.

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THE

THE

HISTORY

OF THE

AMERICAN REVOLUTION.

TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASWATI MAHAL

CHAP. I.

*Of the Settlement of the English Colonies, and of the political Condition of their Inhabitants.**

THE extensive Continent which is now called America, was three hundred years ago unknown to three quarters of the globe. The efforts of Europe during the fifteenth century to find a new path to the rich countries of the East, brought on the discovery of a new world in the West. Christopher Columbus acquired this distinguished honour in the year 1492, but a later 1492. navigator, Americus Vespucius, who had been employed to draw maps of the new discoveries, robbed him of the credit he justly merited of having the country called by his name. In the following year, 1493, Pope Alexander 1493. the sixth, with a munificence that cost him nothing, gave the whole Continent to Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain. This grant was not because the country was uninhabited, but because the nations existing there were infidels; and therefore, in the opinion of the infallible donor, not entitled, to the possession of the territory in which their Creator had placed them. This extravagant claim of a right to dispose of the countries of heathen nations was too absurd to be universally regarded, even in that super-

* For the farther information of the reader, the Editor cannot refrain recommending in the strongest terms, that very accurate and valuable work, "The American Geography, and present "Situation of the United States." By Jedidiah Morse. Printed for Mr. Stockdale.

1496. ſtitious age; and in defiance of it, ſeveral European ſovereigns, though devoted to the See of Rome, undertook and ſucceſsfully proſecuted farther diſcoveries in the Weſtern hemiſphere.

Henry the Seventh of England, by the exertion of an authority ſimilar to that of Pope Alexander, granted to John Cabot and his three ſons a commiſſion, "to navigate all parts of the ocean for the purpoſe of diſcovering iſlands, countries, regions or provinces, either of Gentiles or Infidels, which have been hitherto unknown to all Chriſtian people, with power to ſet up his ſtandard and to take poſſeſſion of the ſame as vaſſals of the crown of England." By virtue of this commiſſion, Sebaſtian Cabot explored and took poſſeſſion of a great part
1498. of the North American continent, in the name and on behalf of the King of England.

The country thus diſcovered by Cabot was poſſeſſed by numerous tribes or nations of people. As theſe had been till then unknown to all other Princes or States, they could not poſſibly have owed their allegiance or ſubjection to any foreign power on earth; they muſt have therefore been independent communities, and as ſuch, capable of acquiring territorial property, in the ſame manner as other nations. Of the various principles on which a right to ſoil has been founded, there is none ſuperior to immemorial occupancy. From what time the Aborigines of America had reſided therein, or from what place they migrated thither, were queſtions of doubtful ſolution, but it was certain that they had long been ſole occupants of the country. In this ſtate no European Prince could derive a title to the ſoil from diſcovery, becauſe that can give a right only to lands and things which either have never been owned or poſſeſſed, or which, after being owned or poſſeſſed, have been voluntarily deſerted. The right of the Indian nations to the ſoil in their poſſeſſion was founded in nature. It was the free and liberal gift of Heaven to them, and ſuch as no foreigner could rightfully annul. The blinded ſuperſtition of the times regarded the Deity as the partial God of Chriſtians, and not as the common father of ſaints and ſavages. The pervading influence of philo-

ſophy,

ſophy, reaſon, and truth, has, ſince that period, given us better notions of the rights of mankind, and of the obligations of morality. Theſe unqueſtionably are not confined to particular modes of faith, but extend univerſally to Jews and Gentiles, to Chriſtians and Infidels. 1496.

Unfounded, however, as the claims of European Sovereigns to American territories were, they ſeverally proceeded to act upon them. By tacit conſent they adopted as a new law of nations, that the countries which each explored ſhould be the abſolute property of the diſcoverer. While they thus ſported with the rights of unoffending nations, they could not agree in their reſpective ſhares of the common ſpoil. The Portugueſe and Spaniards, inflamed by the ſame ſpirit of national aggrandizement, contended for the excluſive ſovereignty of what Columbus had explored. Animated by the rancour of commercial jealouſy, the Dutch and Portugueſe fought for the Brazils. Contrary to her genuine intereſts, England commenced a war in order that her contraband traders on the Mexican coaſt, claimed by the King of Spain, might no longer be ſearched. No farther back than the middle of the preſent century, a conteſt concerning boundaries of American territory belonging to neither, occaſioned a long and bloody war between France and England.

Though Queen Elizabeth and James the Firſt denied the authority of the Pope of Rome to give away the country of Infidels, yet they ſo far adopted the fanciful diſtinction between the rights of Heathens and the rights of Chriſtians, as to make it the foundation of their reſpective grants. They freely gave away what did not belong to them with no other proviſo, than that "the territories and diſtricts ſo granted, be not previouſly occupied and poſſeſſed by the ſubjects of any other Chriſtian Prince or State." The firſt Engliſh patent which was given for the purpoſe of colonizing the country diſcovered by the Cabots, was granted by Queen Elizabeth to Sir Hum- 1578.
phry Gilbert, but this proved abortive. Soon after ſhe licenſed Walter Raleigh, "to ſearch for Heathen lands not inhabited by Chriſtian people," and granted to him in fee all the ſoil "within 200 leagues of the places 1584.
where

1585. where his people ſhould make their dwellings and abi-ings." Under his auſpices an inconſiderable colony took poſſeſſion of a part of the American coaſt, which now forms North-Carolina. In honour of the Virgin Queen his ſovereign, he gave to the whole country the name of Virginia. Theſe firſt ſettlers, and ſeveral others who followed them, were either deſtroyed by the natives, removed by ſucceeding navigators, or died without leaving any behind to tell their melancholy ſtory, for they were never more heard of. No permanent ſettlement was effected till the reign of James the Firſt. The national ardour which ſprung from the long and vigorous adminiſtration of Queen Elizabeth, continued to produce its effects for ſome time after ſhe had ceaſed to animate the whole. Her ſucceſſor, though of an indolent diſpoſition, poſſeſſed a laudable genius for colonization. Naturally fond of novelty, he was much pleaſed with a propoſal made to him, by ſome of the projectors of that age, "for deducing a colony into that part of America commonly called Virginia." He therefore granted letters pa-
1606. tent to Thomas Gates and his aſſociates, by which he conferred on them "all thoſe territories in America, which were not then poſſeſſed by other Chriſtian Princes or people, and which lay between the 34th and 45th degree of north latitude." They were divided into two companies, the firſt conſiſting of adventurers of the city of London, was called the London Company, the ſecond conſiſting of merchants of Plymouth and ſome other weſtern towns, was called the Plymouth Company. The adventurers were empowered to tranſport thither as many Engliſh ſubjects as ſhould willingly accompany them; and it was declared, "that the coloniſts and their children ſhould enjoy the ſame liberties as if they had remained, or were born, within the realm." The month
1607. of April 1607, is the epoch of the firſt permanent ſettlement on the coaſt of Virginia, the name then given to all that extent of country which now forms thirteen States. The emigrants took poſſeſſion of a peninſula on the Northern ſide of James-River, and erected a town which in the honour of their ſovereign they called James-Town. They ſoon experienced the embarraſſments which

which are the ufual lot of new fettlers. In a few months difeafes fwept away one half of their number. Thofe who furvived were greatly chagrined by the many vexations incidental to their new and forlorn fituation. In 1609, the Southern or London Company furrendered their rights to the crown and obtained a new patent. There were then added to the former adventurers, many of the firft nobility and gentry. To them and their fucceffors were granted, in abfolute property, the lands extending from Cape Comfort along the fea coaft, fouthward 200 miles, from the fame promontory 200 miles northward, and from the Atlantic weftward to the South fea. Licence was given to tranfport to Virginia, all perfons willing to go thither. The colonifts and their pofterity were declared, "to be entitled to the rights of fubjects, as if they had remained within the realm." The Company being thus favoured by their fovereign, were encouraged to proceed with fpirit in fupporting and extending their fettlement; but before this was thoroughly accomplifhed, a great wafte of the human fpecies had taken place. Within 20 years after the foundation of James-Town was laid, upwards of 9000 Englifh fubjects had, at different times, migrated thither, but difeafes, famine, wars with the natives, and the other inconveniences of their new fettlement, had made fuch havoc among thefe adventurers, that by the end of that period, there remained alive only about 1800 of that large number. The fame and other caufes continued to operate fo forcibly, that notwithftanding frequent acceffions from new adventurers, Virginia in 1670, fixty-three years after the fettlement of James-Town, contained no more than 40,000 inhabitants.

1607.

1609.

Thirteen years elapfed after James-Town began to be built, before any permanent eftablifhment was effected in the Northern or fecond colony. Various attempts for that purpofe had failed, nor was the arduous bufinefs accomplifhed, till it was undertaken by men who were influenced by higher motives than the extenfion of agriculture or commerce. Thefe men had been called Puritans in England; from their earneft defires of far-

1620.

1620. ther reformation in the eſtabliſhed church, and particularly for their averſion to certain popiſh habits and ceremonies, which they deemed ſinful from their having been abuſed to idolatry. Such was the intolerance of the times, and ſo violent the zeal for uniformity, that popular preachers of this ſect, though men of learning and piety, were ſuſpended, deprived, impriſoned, and ruined, for their not uſing garments or ceremonies which their adverſaries acknowledged to be indifferent. Puritaniſm nevertheleſs gained ground. On experiment it was found that no attempts are more fruitleſs than thoſe which are made with the view of bringing men to think alike on the ſubject of religion. The leaders both of Church and State were too little acquainted with the genuine principles of policy and Chriſtianity, to apply the proper remedy for preſerving peace among diſcording ſects. Inſtead of granting a general liberty of conſcience, compulſory methods were adopted for enforcing uniformity.
1593. An act was paſſed for puniſhing all who refuſed to come to church or were preſent at any conventicle or meeting. The puniſhment was impriſonment till the convicted agreed to conform, and made a declaration of his conformity. If that was not done in three months, he was to quit the realm, and go into perpetual baniſhment. In caſe he did not depart within the time limited, or returned afterwards without a licence, he was to ſuffer death. Such is the reſiſtance of the human mind to all impoſitions on conſcience, that the more the Puritans were oppreſſed, the more were they attached to their diſtinguiſhing opinions, and the more did their ſect prevail. Several of them ſuffered death, in preference to purchaſing an exemption from legal penalties, by doing what, in their opinion, was wrong. It was afterwards reſolved to ſend others, who had equally perſevered in their non-conformity, into baniſhment. Many choſe to avoid theſe evils by voluntarily exiling themſelves from their native country.

1606. A congregation of theſe Puritans, under the paſtoral care of Mr. John Robinſon, being extremely harraſſed for their religious opinions, reſolved to elude their perſecutors by removing to Holland. They continued there ten

ten years, and by hard labour earned a living. Though 1620. they were much esteemed and kindly received by the Hollanders, they were induced by very cogent reasons to think of a second removal. The morals of the Dutch were in their opinion too dissolute; and they were afraid that their offspring would conform to the bad examples daily before them. They had also an ardent desire of propagating religion in foreign lands, and of separating themselves from all the existing establishments in Europe, that they might have an opportunity without interruption of handing down to future ages the model of a pure church, free from the admixture of human additions. America, the colonizing of which then excited a considerable share of public attention, presented a proper theatre for this purpose. After serious and repeated addresses to Heaven for direction, they resolved to cross the Atlantic. An application on their behalf was made to their native sovereign, King James, for full liberty and freedom of conscience, but nothing more could be obtained than a promise, that he would connive at and not molest them. The hope that, when at the distance of 3000 miles, they should be out of the reach of ecclesiastical courts, induced them nevertheless to venture. They sailed, 101 in number, from Plymouth, in September, and arrived at Cape Cod in the November following. Before landing they formed themselves into a body 1620. politic, under the crown of England, for the purpose of "framing just and equal laws, ordinances, acts, constitutions, and offices," to which forty-one of their number subscribed their names, and promised all due submission and obedience. After landing, they employed themselves in making discoveries till the 20th of December. They then fixed on a place for settlement, which they afterwards called New-Plymouth, and purchased the soil from its native proprietors. These adventurers were 1620. now at the commencement of a long and dreary winter, at an immense distance from their former habitations, on the strange coast of an uncultivated country, without a friend to welcome their arrival, or a house to shelter them. In settling down on bare creation they had every

 obstacle

1620. obstacle to surmount that could prove their firmness, or try their patience. The climate was unfavourable; the season cold and pinching. The prospect of obtaining a supply of provisions, by cultivating the stubborn soil, required an immensity of previous labour, and was both distant and uncertain. From the disorders occasioned by their tedious voyage, with insufficient accommodations, together with these brought on them by the fatigues and exertions unavoidable in a new settlement, and the rigor of the season, they buried forty-four persons, nearly one half of their original number, within six months after their landing. Animated with a high degree of religious fervour, they supported these various hardships with unabated resolution. The prospect of an exemption from the tyranny of ecclesiastical courts, and of an undisturbed liberty to worship their Creator in the way that was agreeable to their consciences, was in their estimation a sufficient counterbalance to all that they underwent.

This handful of people laid the foundation of New-England. From them and their subsequent associates have sprung the many thousands that have inhabited Massachusetts, New-Hampshire, Connecticut, and Rhode-Island. The Puritans, to which sect these primitive emigrants belonged, were a plain, frugal, industrious people, who were strict observers of moral and social duties. They held, that the Bible was the sole rule both of faith and practice—that every man was bound to study it and to judge of its meaning for himself, and to follow that line of conduct and mode of worship, which he apprehended to be thereby required. They were also of opinion that no churches or church-officers had any power over other churches or officers, so as to control them—that all church members had equal rights and privileges—that the imposition of articles of faith, modes of worship, habits or ceremonies, was subversive of natural rights and an usurpation of power, not delegated to any man or body of men. They viewed church hierarchy, and especially the lordly pomp of bishops, as opposed to the pure, simple, and equal spirit of Christianity. Their sufferings for non-conformity disposed them to reflect on the nature

ture and extent of civil authority, and led to a conviction that tyranny, whether in church or ſtate, was contrary to nature, reaſon, and revelation. There was a ſimilarity between their opinions of government, and thoſe which they held on the ſubject of religion. Each ſtrengthened the other. Both were favourable to liberty, and hoſtile to all undue exerciſe of authority.

It is matter of regret, that the noble principles of liberty ceaſed to operate on theſe emigrants ſoon after they got power into their hands. In the eleventh year after 1631.
their ſettlement in America, they reſolved, "that no man ſhould be admitted to the freedom of their body politic, but ſuch as were members of ſome of their churches," and afterwards, "that none but ſuch ſhould ſhare in the adminiſtration of civil government, or have a voice in any election." In a few years more, they had ſo far forgot their own ſufferings, as to preſs for uniformity in religion, and to turn perſecutors, in order to accompliſh it. No better apology can be made for this inconſiſtent conduct, than that the true grounds of liberty of conſcience were then neither underſtood, nor practiſed by any ſet of Chriſtians. Nor can any more ſatisfactory account of ſo open a dereliction of former principles be offered, than that human nature is the ſame in all bodies of men, and that thoſe who are in, and thoſe who are out of power, inſenſibly exchange opinions with each other on a change of their reſpective ſituations. Theſe intemperate proceedings were overruled for good. As the intolerance of England peopled Maſſachuſetts, ſo the intolerance of that Province made many emigrate from it, and gave riſe to various diſtant ſettlements, which in the courſe of years were formed into other provincial eſtabliſhments. Connecticut, Rhode-Iſland, and New-Hampſhire, were in a great meaſure ſhoots from the old venerable trunk Maſſachuſetts, and their early growth was much accelerated by her impolitic zeal for uniformity. The country which was ſubdivided into theſe four Provinces, had been called New-England ever ſince the year 1614. The propriety of claſſing them under one general name became more evident from their being ſettled by the ſame kind of people, who were ſtrongly

ſtrongly connected with each other by blood, uniformity of manners, and a ſimilarity of religious and political ſentiments. The early population of this northern country was rapid. The Puritans, harraſſed for their non-conformity in England, paſſed over to it in great numbers. In the ſhort ſpace of twenty years from its firſt ſettlement, 21,200 ſettlers arrived in 298 veſſels. About the year 1640, from a change of affairs, the emigration from Old to New-England in a great meaſure ceaſed.

Maryland was the third Engliſh colony ſettled in North America, but the firſt which from its beginning was erected into a province of the empire. The firſt and ſecond colonies were many years governed by corporations, and in a manner ſubverſive of natural liberty, but the third was from its firſt ſettlement ruled by laws enacted in a provincial legiſlature. The firſt emigration to Maryland, conſiſting of about two hundred gentlemen, chiefly of the Roman Catholic religion, ſailed from England in November, 1632, and landed near the river Potow-
1633. mack in the beginning of the ſubſequent year. Calvert, their leader, purchaſed the right of the Aborigines, and with their conſent took poſſeſſion of the town, which he called St. Mary's. He continued carefully to cultivate their friendſhip, and lived with them on terms of perfect amity. The lands which had been thus ceded were planted with facility, becauſe they had already undergone the diſcipline of Indian tillage. Food was therefore eaſily procured. The Roman Catholics, unhappy in their native land, and deſirous of a peaceful aſylum, went over in great numbers to Maryland. Lord Baltimore, to whom the province had been granted, laid the foundation of its future proſperity on the broad baſis of ſecurity to property, and of freedom in religion. The wiſdom of theſe meaſures converted a dreary wilderneſs into a proſperous colony, becauſe men exert themſelves in their ſeveral purſuits in proportion as they are aſſured of enjoying in ſafety thoſe bleſſings which they wiſh for moſt. Never did a people enjoy more happineſs than the inhabitants of Maryland under Cecilius, the founder of the province. While Virginia perſecuted the Puritans, her ſeverity

severity compelled many to pass over into this new province, the Assembly of which had enacted, "that no persons, professing to believe in Christ Jesus should be molested in respect of their religion, or in the free exercise thereof." The prudence of the one colony, acquired what the folly of the other had thrown away. Mankind then beheld a new scene on the theatre of English America. They saw in Massachusetts the Puritans persecuting various sects, and the church of England in Virginia, actuated by the same spirit, harrassing those who dissented from the established religion, while the Roman Catholics of Maryland tolerated and protected the professors of all denominations. In consequence of this liberal policy, and the other prudent measures adopted by the rulers of this province, it rapidly increased in wealth and population.

The distractions which convulsed England for 25 years preceding the Restoration in 1660, left no leisure for colonising; but no sooner was Charles the Second restored to the throne of his ancestors, than it was resumed with greater spirit than ever. 1662.

Soon after that event the restored monarch granted a charter to Connecticut, which had been previously settled by a voluntary association of persons, who held the soil by an Indian title, without any authority from England. By this charter King Charles established a pure democracy. Every power, legislative, judicial and executive, was invested in the freemen of the corporation, or their delegates, and the colony was under no obligation to communicate its legislative acts to the national sovereign.

In the year following, a royal charter, with a grant of similar powers, was conferred on Rhode-Island and Providence plantations. These, like Connecticut, had been previously settled by emigrants chiefly from Massachusetts, who, as an independent people, had seated themselves on land fairly obtained from the native proprietors, without any authority from the parent state. This colony was originally planted on the Catholic principle, "That every man who submits peaceably to the civil authority, may worship 1663.

worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience, without molestation;" and under all the changes it has undergone, there has been no departure from that broad basis of universal toleration.

1663. In the same year a patent was granted to Lord Clarendon and others, comprehending that extent of country, which now forms the States of North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia. Carolina, though settled originally as one government, was about the year 1728 divided into two. Georgia was, in the year 1732, formed by George the Second into a distinct province.

1664. In the year 1664, King Charles the Second gave to his brother James, Duke of York, a patent which included New-York and New-Jersey. These provinces had been previously settled by Dutch Colonists, and held as territories of the United Netherlands, but they were easily reduced to the obedience of the King of England, who claimed the country by the right of prior discovery. The Duke of York in the same year gave a deed of New-Jersey to Lord Berkely and Sir George Carteret.

1681. Seventeen years afterwards King Charles gave to William Penn, a patent for Pennsylvania. Mr. Penn, some time posterior to this, obtained a farther grant of the land on the Western side of the River Delaware, and South of Pennsylvania, which was formed into a separate government, and is now the State of Delaware. Notwithstanding these charters Mr. Penn did not think himself invested with the right of the soil, till he had purchased it from the native proprietors. In the charter of Pennsylvania, there was no express stipulation as had been inserted in all other Colonial patents, "that the Pennsylvanians and their descendants should be considered as subjects born within the realm." But clauses were inserted, providing that "acts of Parliament concerning trade and navigation, and the customs, should be duly observed." And it was also stipulated, that no custom or other contribution should be laid on the inhabitants or their estates, unless by the consent of the Proprietary, or Governor and Assembly, or *by act of Parliament in England.*" The omission of the first clause, the insertion of

of the ſecond, and the reſervation in favour of Parliament, in the laſt, may have been occaſioned by difficulties which had then ariſen about the rights of the Coloniſts and the power of Parliament over them. Maſſachuſetts had before that time queſtioned the authority of Parliament to tax them and legiſlate for them. The general clauſe that the Coloniſts ſhould retain all the privileges of Engliſhmen, had already been made the baſis of claims, againſt which ſome in the Mother Country had many objections. Perhaps the ruling powers of England were ſenſible, that they had previouſly delegated too much of independence to their Colonies, and intended to be more guarded in future, but their caution was too late. Had it been ſeriouſly intended to control the natural order of events, by the feeble force of words and clauſes in a charter, the experiment ought to have been tried from the firſt, and not reſerved for that of Pennſylvania, which was one of the laſt granted to the Colonies. Near a century after, Dr. Franklin, when examined at the Bar of the Britiſh Houſe of Commons, explained the matter by ſaying, "that the inhabitants from the firſt ſettlement of the Province relied, that the Parliament never would or could by virtue of that reſervation tax them, till it had qualified itſelf conſtitutionally for the exerciſe of ſuch right, by admitting Repreſentatives from the people to be taxed."

In the rapid manner juſt related, was the Engliſh North American Continent parcelled out into diſtinct governments. Little did the wiſdom of the two preceding centuries foreſee of the conſequences both good and evil, that were to reſult to the old world from diſcovering and coloniſing the new. When we conſider the immenſe floods of gold and ſilver, which have flowed from it into Europe, the ſubſequent increaſe of induſtry and population, the prodigious extenſion of commerce, manufactures, and navigation, and the influence of the whole on manners and arts, we ſee ſuch an accumulation of good, as leads us to rank Columbus among the greateſt benefactors of the human race: but when we view the injuſtice done the natives, the extirpation of many of their

their numerous nations, whose names are no more heard. —The havoc made among the first settlers.—The slavery of the Africans, to which America has furnished the temptation, and the many long and bloody wars which it has occasioned, we behold such a crowd of woes, as excites an apprehension, that the evil has outweighed the good.

In vain do we look among ancient nations, for examples of Colonies established on principles of policy, similar to those of the Colonies of Great-Britain. England did not, like the republics of Greece, oblige her sons to form distant communities in the wilds of the earth. Like Rome she did not give lands as a gratuity to soldiers, who became a military force for the defence of her frontiers. She did not, like Carthage, subdue the neighbouring States, in order to acquire an exclusive right to their commerce. No conquest was ever attempted over the Aborigines of America. Their right to the soil was disregarded, and their country looked upon as a waste, which was open to the occupancy and use of other nations. It was considered that settlements might be there formed for the advantage of those who should migrate thither, as well as of the Mother Country. The rights and interests of the native proprietors were, all this time, deemed of no account.

What was the extent of obligations by which Colonies planted under these circumstances were bound to the Mother Country, is a subject of nice discussion. Whether these arose from nature and the constitution, or from compact, is a question necessarily connected with many others. While the friends of Union contended that the King of England had a property in the soil of America, by virtue of a right derived from prior discovery: and that his subjects by migrating from one part of his dominions to another, did not lessen their obligations to obey the supreme power of the nation, it was inferred, that the emigrants to English America continued to owe the same obedience to the King and Parliament, as if they had never quitted the land of their nativity. But if, as others contended, the Indians were the

the only lawful proprietors of the country in which their Creator had placed them, and they ſold their right to emigrants who, as men, had a right to leave their native country, and as ſubjects, had obtained chartered permiſſion to do ſo, it follows from theſe premiſes, that the obligations of the Coloniſts to their parent State muſt have reſulted more from compact, and the proſpect of reciprocal advantage, than from natural obligation. The latter opinions ſeem to have been adopted by ſeveral of the Coloniſts, particularly in New-England. Sundry perſons of influence in that country always held, that birth was no neceſſary cauſe of ſubjection, for that the ſubject of any Prince or State had a natural right to remove to any other State or quarter of the globe, eſpecially if deprived of liberty of conſcience, and that, upon ſuch removal, his ſubjection ceaſed.

The validity of charters about which the emigrants to America were univerſally anxious, reſts upon the ſame foundation. If the right of the ſovereigns of England to the ſoil of America was ideal, and contrary to natural juſtice, and if no one can give what is not his own, their charters were on ſeveral accounts a nullity. In the eye of reaſon and philoſophy, they could give no right to American territory. The only validity which ſuch grants could have, was, that the grantees had from their ſovereign a permiſſion to depart from their native country, and negotiate with the proprietors for the purchaſe of the ſoil, and thereupon to acquire a power of juriſdiction ſubject to his crown. Theſe were the opinions of many of the ſettlers in New-England. They looked upon their charters as a voluntary compact between their ſovereign and themſelves, by which they were bound neither to be ſubject to, nor ſeek protection from any other Prince, nor to make any laws repugnant to thoſe of England: but did not conſider them as inferring an obligation of obedience to a Parliament, in which they were unrepreſented. The proſpects of advantage which the emigrants to America expected from the protection of their native ſovereign, and the proſpect of aggrandizement which their native ſovereign expected from the

the extension of his empire, made the former very solicitous for charters, and the latter very ready to grant them. Neither reasoned clearly on their nature nor well understood their extent. In less than eight years 1500 miles of the sea coast were granted away, and so little did they who gave, or they who accepted of charters, understand their own transactions, that in several cases the same ground was covered by contradictory grants, and with an absurdity that can only be palliated by the ignorance of the parties, some of the grants extended to the South Sea, over a country whose breadth is yet unknown, and which to this day is unexplored.

Ideal as these charters were, they answered a temporary purpose. The Colonists reposed confidence in them, and were excited to industry on their credit. They also deterred foreign European powers from disturbing them, because agreeably to the late law of nations, relative to the appropriation of newly discovered Heathen countries, they inferred the protection of the sovereign who gave them. They also opposed a barrier to open and gross encroachments of the mother country on the rights of the colonists; a particular detail of these is not now necessary. Some general remarks may, nevertheless, be made on the early periods of colonial history, as they cast light on the late revolution. Long before the declaration of independence, several of the colonies on different occasions declared, that they ought not to be taxed but by their own provincial assemblies, and that they considered subjection to acts of a British Parliament, in which they had no representation, as a grievance. It is also worthy of being noted, that of the thirteen colonies, which have been lately formed into States, no one (Georgia excepted) was settled at the expence of Government. Towards the settlement of that Southern frontier, considerable sums have at different times been granted by Parliament, but the twelve more Northern provinces had been wholly settled by private adventurers, without any advances from the national treasury. It does not appear, from existing records, that any compensation for their lands was ever made to the Aborigines

Aborigines of America, by the crown or Parliament of England; but policy as well as juſtice led the Coloniſts to purchaſe and pay for what they occupied. This was done in almoſt every ſettlement, and they proſpered moſt, who by juſtice and kindneſs took the greateſt pains to conciliate the good-will of the natives.

It is in vain to look for well-balanced conſtitutions in the early periods of colonial hiſtory. Till the revolution in the year 1688, a period ſubſequent to the ſettlemeut of the colonies, England herſelf can ſcarcely be ſaid to have had a fixed conſtitution. At that eventful æra the line was firſt drawn between the privileges of ſubjects, and the prerogatives of ſovereigns. The legal and conſtitutional hiſtory of the colonies, in their early periods, therefore, affords but little inſtruction. It is ſufficient in general to obſerve, that in leſs than eighty years from the firſt permament Engliſh ſettlement in North America; the two original patents granted to the Plymouth and London Companies were divided, and ſubdivided, into twelve diſtinct and unconnected provinces, and in fifty years more a thirteenth, by the name of Georgia, was added to the ſouthern extreme of previous eſtabliſhments.

To each of theſe, after various changes, there was ultimately granted a form of government reſembling, in its moſt eſſential parts, as far as local circumſtances would permit, that which was eſtabliſhed in the parent ſtate. A minute deſcription of conſtitutions, which no longer exiſt, would be both tedious and unprofitable. In general, it may be obſerved, that agreeably to the ſpirit of the Britiſh conſtitution, ample proviſion was made for the liberties of the inhabitants. The prerogatives of royalty and dependence on the Mother Country, were but feebly impreſſed on the colonial forms of government. In ſome of the provinces the inhabitants choſe their governors, and all other public officers, and their legiſlatures were under little or no controul. In others, the crown delegated moſt of its power to particular perſons, who were alſo inveſted with the property of the ſoil. In thoſe which were moſt immediately dependent on the King, he exerciſed no higher prerogatives over the Coloniſts than over their fellow

fubjects in England, and his power over the provincial legiflative affemblies was not greater than what he was conftitutionally vefted with, over the Houfe of Commons in the Mother Country. From the acquiefcence of the parent ftate, the fpirit of her conftitution, and daily experience, the Colonifts grew up in a belief, that their local affemblies ftood in the fame relation to them, as the Parliament of Great Britain to the inhabitants of that ifland. The benefits of legiflation were conferred on both, only through thefe conftitutional channels.

It is remarkable, that though the Englifh poffeffions in America were far inferior in natural riches to thofe which fell to the lot of other Europeans, yet the fecurity of property and of liberty, derived from the Englifh conftitution, gave them a confequence to which the colonies of other powers, though fettled at an earlier day, have not yet attained. The wife and liberal policy of England towards her Colonies, during the firft century and half after their fettlement, had a confiderable influence in exalting them to this pre-eminence. She gave them full liberty to govern themfelves by fuch laws as the local legiflatures thought neceffary, and left their trade open to every individual in her dominions. She alfo gave them the ampleft permiffion to purfue their refpective interefts in fuch manner as they thought proper, and referved little for herfelf, but the benefit of their trade, and that of a political union under the fame head. The colonies, founded by other powers, experienced no fuch indulgencies. Portugal and Spain burdened theirs with many vexatious regulations, gave encouragement only to what was for their own intereft, and punifhed whatever had a contrary tendency. France and Holland did not adopt fuch oppreffive maxims, but were, in fact, not much lefs rigorous and coercive. They parted, as it were, with the propriety of their Colonies to mercantile affociations, which fold to the Colonifts the commodities of Europe, at an enormous advance, and took the produce of their lands at a low price, and, at the fame time, difcouraged the growth of any more than they could difpofe of, at exceffive profits. Thefe oppreffive regulations were followed with

with their natural consequence: the settlements thus restricted advanced but slowly in population and in wealth.

The English Colonies participated in that excellent form of government, with which their parent isle was blessed, and which has raised it to an admirable height of agriculture, commerce, and manufactures. After many struggles, it had been acknowledged to be essential to the constitution of Great Britain, that the people could not be compelled to pay any taxes, nor be bound by any laws, but such as had been granted or enacted with the consent of themselves, or of their representatives. It was also one of their privileges, that they could not be affected either in their property, their liberties, or their persons, but by the unanimous consent of twelve of their peers.

From the operation of these general principles of liberty, and the wise policy of Great Britain, her American settlements increased in number, wealth and resources, with a rapidity which surpassed all previous calculations. Neither ancient nor modern history can produce an example of Colonies governed with equal wisdom, or flourishing with equal rapidity. In the short space of 150 years their numbers increased to three millions, and their commerce to such a degree, as to be more than a third of that of Great Britain. They also extended their settlements 1500 miles on the sea coast, and 300 miles to the westward. Their rapid population, though partly accelerated by the influx of strangers, was principally owing to internal causes. In consequence of the equality of fortune and simplicity of manners, which prevailed among them, their inhabitants multiplied far beyond the proportion of old nations, corrupted and weakened by the vices of wealth, and above all, of vanity, than which, perhaps, there is no greater enemy to the increase of the human species.

The good effects of a wise policy and equal government were not only discernible in raising the Colonies of England to a pre-eminence over those of other European powers, but in raising some among themselves to greater importance than others. Their relative population and wealth were by no means correspondent to their respec-

tive advantages of ſoil and climate. From the common diſproportion between the natural and artificial wealth of different countries, it ſeems to be a general rule, that the more nature does for any body of men, the leſs they are diſpoſed to do for themſelves.

The New-England provinces, though poſſeſſed of comparatively a barren country, were improved much faſter than others, which were bleſſed with a ſuperior ſoil and milder climate. Their firſt ſettlers were animated with a high degree of that religious fervor which excites to great undertakings: they alſo ſettled their vacant lands on principles of the wiſeſt policy. Inſtead of granting large tracts to individuals, they ſold the ſoil in ſmall farms, to thoſe who perſonally cultivated the ſame. Inſtead of diſſeminating their inhabitants over an extenſive country, they formed ſucceſſive ſettlements, in townſhips of ſix miles ſquare. They alſo made ſuch arrangements, in theſe townſhips, as co-extended the bleſſings of education and of religious inſtruction with their ſettlements. By theſe means induſtry and morality were propagated, and knowledge was generally diffuſed.

In proportion to their reſpective numbers, it is probable that no other country in the world contained more ſober orderly citizens, and fewer who were profligate and abandoned. Thoſe high crimes which are uſually puniſhed with death, were ſo rare in New-England, that many years have elapſed, in large populous ſettlements, without a ſingle execution. Their leſs fertile ſoil diſpoſed them to a ſpirit of adventure, and their victorious induſtry roſe ſuperior to every obſtacle. In carrying on the whale fiſhery, they not only penetrated the deepeſt frozen receſſes of Hudſon's Bay, and Davis' Straits; but pierced into the oppoſite regions of polar cold. While ſome of them were ſtriking the harpoon on the coaſt of Africa, others purſued their gigantic game near the ſhores of Braſil. While they were yet in their infancy as a political ſociety, they carried on this perilous buſineſs to an extent exceeding all that the perſeverance of Holland, the activity of France, or the vigour of Engliſh enterprize, had ever accompliſhed. A ſpirit of liberty prompted their

induſtry,

induſtry, and a free conſtitution guarded their civil rights. The country was ſettled with yeomanry, who were both proprietors, and cultivators, of the ſoil. Luxury was eſtranged from their borders. Enervating wealth and pinching poverty were both equally rare. Early marriages, and a numerous offspring, were common—thence population was rapid, and the inhabitants generally poſſeſſed that happy ſtate of mediocrity, which favours the improvement both of mind and body.

New-York joined New-England, but did not increaſe with equal rapidity. A few, by monopolizing large tracts of lands, reduced many to the neceſſity of being tenants, or of removing to other provinces, where land could be obtained on more favourable terms. The increaſe of population, in this province, was nevertheleſs great, when compared with that of old countries. This appears from the following ſtatement of their numbers at different periods. In 1756, the province of New-York contained 83,233 whites, and in 1771, 148,124 an increaſe of nearly two for one, in the ſpace of fifteen years.

Pennſylvania was at firſt ſettled under the auſpices of the celebrated William Penn, who introduced a number of induſtrious inhabitants, chiefly of the ſect of Quakers. The population of this country advanced equally with that of the New-England provinces. Among the inducements operating on foreigners to ſettle in Pennſylvania was a moſt excellent form of provincial government, which ſecured the religious as well as the civil rights of its inhabitants. While the Mother Country laboured under an oppreſſive eccleſiaſtical eſtabliſhment, and while partialities of the ſame kind were ſanctioned by law, in ſome of the American provinces, perfect liberty of conſcience, and an exact equality of all ſects was, in every period, a part of the conſtitution of Pennſylvania.

Quaker ſimplicity, induſtry, and frugality, contributed, in like manner, to the flouriſhing of that province. The habits of that plain people correſpond, admirably, with a new country, and with republican conſtitutions. Oppoſed to idleneſs and extravagance, they combined the whole

force of religion, with cuftoms and laws, to exile thefe vices from their fociety. The firft quaker fettlers were foon followed by Germans, whofe induftry was not inferior to their own. The emigrants from other countries who fettled in Pennfylvania, followed thefe good examples, and induftry and frugality became predominant virtues over the whole province.

The policy of a Loan-Office was alfo eminently beneficial. The proprietaries of Pennfylvania fold their lands in fmall tracts, and on long credit. The purchafers were indulged with the liberty of borrowing, on intereft, paper bills of credit, out of the Loan-Office, on the mortgage of their lands. Perhaps there never was an inftitution which contributed more to the happinefs of the people, or to the flourifhing of a new country, than this land Loan-Office fcheme. The province being enriched by the clear intereft of its loaned paper, was thereby enabled to defray the expences of government with moderate taxes. The induftrious farmer was furnifhed with the means of cultivating and ftocking his farm. Thefe improvements, by increafing the value of the land, not only eftablifhed the credit of the paper, but enabled the borrower, in a few years, to pay off the original loan with the productions of the foil. The progreffive improvement of Pennfylvania may be eftimated from the increafe of its trade. In the year 1704, that province imported goods from the Mother Country, amounting in value only to £.11,499 fterling, but in 1772, to the value of £.507,909, an increafe of nearly fifty for one, in little more than half a century.

In Maryland and Virginia, a policy lefs favourable to population, and fomewhat different from that of Pennfylvania, took place. The church of England was incorporated with the firft fettlement of Virginia, and in the lapfe of time, it alfo became the eftablifhed religion of Maryland. In both thefe provinces, long before the American revolution, that church poffeffed a legal pre-eminence, and was maintained at the expence, not only of its own members, but of all other denominations. This deterred great numbers, efpecially of the Prefbyterian

rian denomination, who had emigrated from Ireland, from settling within the limits of these governments, and fomented a spirit of discord between those who belonged to, and those who dissented from, the established church.

In these and the other southern provinces, domestic slavery was common. Though it was not by law forbidden any where, yet there were comparatively few slaves to the northward of Maryland. The peaceable and benevolent religion of the Quakers produced their united opposition to all traffic of the human race. Many individuals of other denominations in like manner discountenanced it, but the principal ground of difference on this head between the northern and southern provinces, arose, less from religious principles, than from climate, and local circumstances. In the former, they found it to be for their interest to cultivate their lands with white men, in the latter with those of an opposite colour. The stagnant waters, and low lands, which are so frequent on the shores of Maryland and Virginia, and on the coasts, and near the rivers in the southern provinces, generate diseases, which are more fatal to whites than blacks. There is a physical difference in the constitution of these varieties of the human species. The latter secrete less by the kidnies, and more by the glands of the skin, than the former. This greater degree of transpiration renders the blacks more tolerant of heat than the whites. The perspirable matter, thrown off by the former, is more fœtid than that of the latter. It is perhaps owing to these circumstances, that blacks enjoy better health, in warm marshy countries, than whites.

It is certain, that a great part of the low country in several of the provinces must have remained without cultivation, if it had not been cultivated by black men. From imagined necessity, founded on the natural state of the country, domestic slavery seemed to be forced on the southern provinces. It favoured cultivation, but produced many baneful consequences. It was particularly hostile to the proper education of youth. Industry, temperance, and abstinence, virtues essential to the health and vigour of both mind and body, were with difficulty

practiſed, where the labour of ſlaves procured an abundance, not only of the neceſſaries, but of the delicacies of life, and where daily opportunities and facilities were offered, for early, exceſſive, and enervating indulgences. Slavery alſo led to the engroſſing of land in the hands of a few. It impeded the introduction of labouring freemen, and of courſe diminiſhed the capacity of the country for active defence, and at the ſame time endangered internal tranquillity, by multiplying a ſpecies of inhabitants who had no intereſt in the ſoil. For if a ſlave can have a country in the world, it muſt be any other in preference to that, in which he is compelled to labour for a maſter. Such is the force of habit, and the pliancy of human nature, that though degrading freedom to the condition of ſlaves, would, to many, be more intolerable than death, yet negroes who have been born and bred in habits of ſlavery, are ſo well ſatisfied with their condition, that ſeveral have been known to reject proffered freedom, and, as far as circumſtances authorize us to judge, emancipation does not appear to be the wiſh of the generality of them. The peaſantry of few countries enjoy as much of the comforts of life, as the ſlaves, who belong to good maſters. Intereſt concurs with the finer feelings of human nature, to induce ſlave-holders to treat with humanity and kindneſs thoſe who are ſubject to their will and power. There is frequently more happineſs in kitchens than parlours, and life is often more pleaſantly enjoyed by the ſlave than his maſter. The political evils of ſlavery do not ſo much ariſe from the diſtreſſes it occaſions to ſlaves, as from its diminiſhing the incitements to induſtry, and from its unhappy influence on the general ſtate of ſociety. Where it is common, a few grow rich, and live in eaſe and luxury, but the community is deprived of many of its reſources for independent happineſs, and depreſſed to a low ſtation on the ſcale of national greatneſs. The aggregate induſtry of a country, in which ſlaves and freemen are intermixed, will always be leſs than where there is a number of freemen equal to both. Nothing ſtimulates to induſtry ſo much as intereſt. The man who works for another, will contrive many artifices to make that

that work as little as poſſible, but he who has an immediate profit from his labour, will diſregard taſks, times and ſeaſons. In ſettlements where the ſoil is cultivated by ſlaves, it ſoon becomes unfaſhionable for freemen to labour, than which no greater curſe can befal a country. The individuals, who by the induſtry of their ſlaves are releaſed from the neceſſity of perſonal exertions, will be ſtrongly tempted to many practices injurious to themſelves and others. Idleneſs is the parent of every vice, while labour of all kinds favours and facilitates the practice of virtue. Unhappy is that country, where neceſſity compels the uſe of ſlaves, and unhappy are the people, where the original decree of heaven, "that man ſhould eat his bread in the ſweat of his face" is by any means whatever generally eluded.

The influence of theſe cauſes was ſo extenſive, that though the Southern Provinces poſſeſſed the moſt fruitful ſoil and the mildeſt climate, yet they were far inferior to their neighbours in ſtrength, population, induſtry, and aggregate wealth. This inferiority, increaſed or diminiſhed, with the number of ſlaves in each Province, contraſted with the number of freemen. The ſame obſervation held good between different parts of the ſame Province. The ſea coaſt which, from neceſſity, could be cultivated only by black men, was deficient in many of the enjoyments of life, and lay at the mercy of every bold invader, while the Weſtern Country, where cultivation was more generally carried on by freemen, though ſettled at a later period, ſooner attained the means of ſelf-defence, and, relatively, a greater proportion of thoſe comforts with which a cultivated country rewards its induſtrious inhabitants.

In the Southern Provinces, the long credit given by Britiſh merchants was a principal ſource of their flouriſhing. The immenſe capitals of the merchants trading to the North American Continent enabled them to extend credit to the term of ſeveral years. They received a profit on their goods, and an annual intereſt of five per cent. on the ſums for which they were ſold. This enabled the American merchant to extend credit to the

 planter,

planter, from whom he received a higher intereſt than he paid in Great-Britain. The planters being furniſhed, on credit, with ſlaves and every thing neceſſary for the cultivation of their lands, when careful and induſtrious, cleared ſo much more than the legal intereſt with which they were charged, that in a few years of ſucceſsful planting, the difference enabled them to pay their debts and clear their capital. By the help of credit, a beneficial intercourſe was eſtabliſhed, which redounded to the benefit of both parties.

Theſe cauſes eminently contributed to the proſperity of the Engliſh Provinces. Others, beſides co-operating to the ſame end, produced a warm love for liberty, a high ſenſe of the rights of human nature, and a predilection for independence.

The firſt emigrants from England for coloniſing America, left the Mother Country at a time when the dread of arbitrary power was the predominant paſſion of the nation. Except the very modern charter of Georgia, in the year 1732, all the Engliſh Colonies obtained their charters and their greateſt number of European ſettlers, between the years 1603 and 1688. In this period a remarkable ſtruggle between prerogative and privilege commenced, and was carried on till it terminated in a revolution highly favourable to the liberties of the people. In the year 1621, when the Engliſh Houſe of Commons claimed freedom of ſpeech, "as their ancient and undoubted right, and an inheritance tranſmitted to them from their anceſtors;" King James the Firſt replied, "that he could not allow of their ſtyle, in mentioning their ancient and undoubted rights, but would rather have wiſhed they had ſaid, that their privileges were derived from the grace and permiſſion of their ſovereign." This was the opening of a diſpute which occupied the tongues, pens, and ſwords, of the moſt active men in the nation, for a period of ſeventy years. It is remarkable that the ſame period is exactly co-incident with the ſettlement of the Engliſh Colonies. James, educated in the arbitrary ſentiments of the divine right of Kings, conceived his ſubjects to be his property, and that their privileges were matters

matters of grace and favour flowing from his generoſity. This high claim of prerogative excited oppoſition in ſupport of the rights of the people. In the progreſs of the diſpute, Charles the Firſt, ſon of King James, in attempting to levy ſhip-money, and other revenues without conſent of Parliament, involved himſelf in a war with his ſubjects, in which, after various conflicts, he was brought to the block and ſuffered death as an enemy to the conſtitution of his country. Though the monarchy was reſtored under Charles the Second, and tranſmitted to James the Second, yet the ſame arbitrary maxims being purſued, the nation, tenacious of its rights, invited the Prince of Orange to the ſovereignty of the iſland, and expelled the reigning family from the throne. While theſe ſpirited exertions were made, in ſupport of the liberties of the parent iſle, the Engliſh Colonies, were ſettled, and chiefly with inhabitants of that claſs of people, which was moſt hoſtile to the claims of prerogative. Every tranſaction in that period of Engliſh hiſtory, ſupported the poſition that the people have a right to reſiſt their ſovereign, when he invades their liberties, and to transfer the crown from one to another, when the good of the community requires it.

The Engliſh Coloniſts were from their firſt ſettlement in America, devoted to liberty, on Engliſh ideas, and Engliſh principles. They not only conceived themſelves to inherit the privileges of Engliſhmen, but though in a colonial ſituation, actually poſſeſſed them.

After a long war between King and Parliament, and a Revolution—theſe privileges were ſettled on the following fundamental principles: "That it was the undoubted right of Engliſh ſubjects, being freemen or freeholders, to give their property, only by their own conſent. That the Houſe of Commons exerciſed the ſole right of granting the money of the people of England, becauſe that Houſe alone, repreſented them. That taxes were the free gifts of the people to their rulers. That the authority of ſovereigns was to be exerciſed only for the good of their ſubjects. That it was the right of the people to meet together, and peaceably to conſider of their grievances—

to

to petition for a redrefs of them, and finally, when intolerable grievances were unredreffed, to feek relief, on the failure of petitions and remonftrances, by forcible means."

Opinions of this kind generally prevailing, produced, among the Colonifts, a more determined fpirit of oppofition to all encroachments on their rights, than would probably have taken place, had they emigrated from the Mother Country in the preceding century, when the doctrines of paffive obedience, non-refiftance, and the divine right of kings, were generally received.

That attachment to their fovereign, which was diminifhed in the firft emigrants to America, by being removed to a great diftance from his influence, was ftill farther diminifhed in their defcendants. When the American revolution commenced, the inhabitants of the Colonies were for the moft part, the third and fourth, and fometimes the fifth or fixth generation, from the original emigrants. In the fame degree as they were removed from the parent ftock, they were weaned from that partial attachment, which bound their forefathers to the place of their nativity. The affection for the Mother Country, as far as it was a natural paffion, wore away in fucceffive generations, till at laft it had fcarcely any exiftence.

The mercantile intercourfe, which connects different countries, was, in the early periods of the Englifh Colonies, far fhort of that degree, which is neceffary to perpetuate a friendly union. Had the firft great colonial eftablifhments been made in the Southern Provinces, where the fuitablenefs of native commodities would have maintained a brifk and direct trade with England—the conftant exchange of good offices between the two countries would have been more likely to perpetuate their friendfhip. But as the Eaftern Provinces were the firft, which were thickly fettled, and they did not for a long time cultivate an extenfive trade with England, their defcendants fpeedily loft the fond attachment, which their forefathers felt to their Parent State. The bulk of the people in New-England knew little of the Mother Country, having only heard of her as a diftant kingdom, the rulers of

of which had, in the preceding century, perfecuted and banifhed their anceftors to the woods of America.

The diftance of America from Great-Britain generated ideas in the minds of the Colonifts favourable to liberty. Three thoufand miles of ocean feparated them from the Mother Country. Seas rolled, and months paffed, between orders and their execution. In large governments the circulation of power is enfeebled at the extremities. This refults from the nature of things, and is the eternal law of extenfive or detached empire. Colonifts, growing up to maturity, at fuch an immenfe diftance from the feat of government, perceived the obligation of dependence much more feebly, than the inhabitants of the parent ifle, who not only faw, but daily felt, the fangs of power. The wide extent and nature of the country contributed to the fame effect. The natural feat of freedom is among high mountains and pathlefs deferts, fuch as abound in the wilds of America.

The religion of the Colonifts alfo nurtured a love for liberty. They were chiefly Proteftants, and all Proteftantifm is founded on a ftrong claim to natural liberty, and the right of private judgement. A majority of them were of that clafs of men, who, in England, are called Diffenters. Their tenets being the Proteftantifm of the Proteftant religion, are hoftile to all interference of authority in matters of opinion, and predifpofe to a jealoufy for civil liberty. They who belonged to the Church of England were for the moft part independents, as far as church government and hierarchy were concerned. They ufed the liturgy of that church, but were without bifhops, and were ftrangers to thofe fyftems, which make religion an engine of ftate. That policy, which unites the loweft curate with the greateft metropolitan, and connects both with the fovereign, was unknown among the Colonifts. Their religion was their own, and neither impofed by authority, nor made fubfervient to political purpofes. Though there was a variety of fects, they all agreed in the communion of liberty, and all reprobated the courtly doctrines of paffive obedience, and non-refiftance. The fame difpofitions were foftered by the ufual

ufual modes of education in the Colonies. The ftudy of law was common and fafhionable. The infinity of difputes, in a new and free country, made it lucrative, and multiplied its followers. No order of men has, in all ages, been more favourable to liberty, than lawyers. Where they are not won over to the fervice of government, they are formidable adverfaries to it. Profeffionally taught the rights of human nature, they keenly and quickly perceive every attack made on them. While others judge of bad principles by the actual grievances they occafion, lawyers difcover them at a diftance, and trace future mifchiefs from gilded innovations.

The reading of thofe Colonifts who were inclined to books, generally favoured the caufe of liberty. Large libraries were uncommon in the New World. Difquifitions on abftrufe fubjects, and curious refearches into antiquity, did not accord with the genius of a people, fettled in an uncultivated country, where every furrounding object impelled to action, and little leifure was left for fpeculation. Their books were generally fmall in fize, and few in number: a great part of them confifted of thofe fafhionable authors, who have defended the caufe of liberty. Cato's letters, the Independent Whig, and fuch productions, were common in one extreme of the Colonies, while in the other, hiftories of the Puritans kept alive the remembrance of the fufferings of their forefathers, and infpired a warm attachment, both to the civil and the religious rights of human nature.

In the Southern Colonies, flavery nurtured a fpirit of liberty among the free inhabitants. All mafters of flaves who enjoy perfonal liberty will be both proud and jealous of their freedom. It is, in their opinion, not only an enjoyment, but a kind of rank and privilege. In them, the haughtinefs of domination combines with the fpirit of liberty. Nothing could more effectually animate the oppofition of a planter to the claims of Great-Britain, than a conviction that thofe claims in their extent degraded him to a degree of dependence on his fellow fubjects, equally humiliating with that which exifted between his flaves and himfelf.

The

The state of society in the Colonies favoured a spirit of liberty and independence. Their inhabitants were all of one rank. Kings, nobles, and bishops, were unknown among them. From their first settlements, the English Provinces received impressions favourable to democratic forms of government. Their dependent situation forbad any inordinate ambition among their native sons, and the humility of their society, abstracted as they were from the splendour and amusements of the old Old World, held forth few allurements to invite the residence of such from the Mother Country as aspired to hereditary honours. In modern Europe, the remains of the feudal system have occasioned an order of men superior to that of the commonalty, but, as few of that class migrated to the Colonies, they were settled with the yeomanry. Their inhabitants, unaccustomed to that distinction of ranks, which the policy of Europe has established, were strongly impressed with an opinion, that all men are by nature equal. They could not easily be persuaded that their grants of land, or their civil rights, flowed from the munificence of Princes. Many of them had never heard of Magna Charta, and those who knew the circumstances of the remarkable period of English history, when that was obtained, did not rest their claims to liberty and property on the transactions of that important day. They looked up to Heaven as the source of their rights, and claimed, not from the promises of kings, but from the parent of the universe. The political creed of an American Colonist was short but substantial. He believed that God made all mankind originally equal: that he endowed them with the rights of life, property, and as much liberty as was consistent with the rights of others. That he had bestowed on his vast family of the human race, the earth for their support, and that all government was a political institution between men naturally equal, not for the aggrandizement of one, or a few, but for the general happiness of the whole community. Impressed with sentiments of this kind, they grew up, from their earliest infancy, with that confidence which is well calculated to inspire a love for liberty, and a prepossession in favour of independence.

In

In confequence of the vaft extent of vacant country, every Colonift was, or eafily might be, a freeholder. Settled on lands of his own, he was both farmer and landlord—producing all the neceffaries of life from his own grounds, he felt himfelf both free and independent. Each individual might hunt, fifh, or fowl, without injury to his neighbours. Thefe immunities which, in old countries, are guarded by the fanction of penal laws, and monopolized by a few, are the common privileges of all in America. Colonifts, growing up in the enjoyment of fuch rights, felt the reftraint of law more feebly than they, who are educated in countries, where long habits have made fubmiffion familiar. The mind of man naturally relifhes liberty—wherever from the extent of a new and unfettled country, fome abridgements thereof are ufelefs, and others impracticable, this natural defire of freedom is ftrengthened, and the independent mind revolts at the idea of fubjection.

The Colonifts were alfo preferved from the contagion of minifterial influence by their diftance from the metropolis. Remote from the feat of power and corruption, they were not over-awed by the one, nor debauched by the other. Few were the means of detaching individuals from the intereft of the public. High offices were neither fufficiently numerous nor lucrative to purchafe many adherents, and the moft valuable of thefe were conferred on natives of Britain. Every man occupied that rank only, which his own induftry, or that of his near anceftors, had procured him. Each individual being cut off from all means of rifing to importance, but by his perfonal talents, was encouraged to make the moft of thofe with which he was endowed. Profpects of this kind excited emulation, and produced an enterprifing laborious fet of men, not eafily overcome by difficulties, and full of projects for bettering their condition.

The enervating opulence of Europe had not yet reached the Colonifts. They were deftitute of gold and filver, but abounded in the riches of nature. A famenefs of circumftances and occupations created a great fenfe of equality, and difpofed them to union in any common caufe, from

from the ſucceſs of which, they might expect to partake of equal advantages.

The Colonies were communities of ſeparate independent individuals, under no general influence, but that of their perſonal feelings and opinions. They were not led by powerful families, nor by great officers in church or ſtate. Reſiding chiefly on lands of their own, and employed in the wholeſome labours of the field, they were in a great meaſure ſtrangers to luxury. Their wants were few, and among the great bulk of the people, for the moſt part, ſupplied from their own grounds. Their enjoyments were neither far-fetched, nor dearly purchaſed, and were ſo moderate in their kind, as to leave both mind and body unimpaired. Inured from their early years to the toils of a country life, they dwelled in the midſt of rural plenty. Unacquainted with ideal wants, they delighted in perſonal independence. Removed from the preſſures of indigence, and the indulgence of affluence, their bodies were ſtrong, and their minds vigorous.

The great bulk of the Britiſh Coloniſts were farmers, or planters, who were alſo proprietors of the ſoil. The merchants, mechanics, and manufacturers, taken collectively, did not amount to one fifteenth of the whole number of inhabitants. While the cultivators of the ſoil depend on nothing but Heaven and their own induſtry, other claſſes of men contract more or leſs of ſervility, from depending on the caprice of their cuſtomers. The exceſs of the farmers over the collective numbers of all the other inhabitants, gave a caſt of independence to the manners of the people, and diffuſed the exalting ſentiments, which have always predominated among thoſe who are cultivators of their own grounds: theſe were farther promoted by their moderate circumſtances, which deprived them of all ſuperfluity for idleneſs, or effeminate indulgence.

The provincial conſtitutions of the Engliſh Colonies nurtured a ſpirit of liberty. The King and government of Great Britain held no patronage in America, which could create a portion of attachment and influence, ſufficient to counteract that ſpirit in popular aſſemblies, which, when left to itſelf, ill brooks any authority that interferes with its own.

The inhabitants of the Colonies from the beginning, eſpecially in New-England, enjoyed a government which was but little ſhort of being independent. They had not only the image, but the ſubſtance of the Engliſh conſtitution. They choſe moſt of their magiſtrates, and paid them all. They had in effect the ſole direction of their internal government. The chief mark of their ſubordination conſiſted in their making no laws repugnant to the laws of their Mother Country; in their ſubmitting to have ſuch laws as they made to be repealed by the King; and their obeying ſuch reſtrictions as were laid on their trade by Parliament. The latter were often evaded, and with impunity. The other ſmall checks were ſcarcely felt, and for a long time were in no reſpects injurious to their intereſts.

Under theſe favourable circumſtances, Colonies in the new world had advanced nearly to the magnitude of a nation, while the greateſt part of Europe was almoſt wholly ignorant of their progreſs. Some arbitrary proceedings of governors, proprietary partialities, or democratical jealouſies, now and then interrupted the political calm which generally prevailed among them, but theſe and other occaſional impediments of their proſperity, for the moſt part, ſoon ſubſided. The circumſtances of the country afforded but little ſcope for the intrigues of politicians, or the turbulence of demagogues. The Coloniſts being but remotely affected by the buſtlings of the old world, and having but few objects of ambition or contention among themſelves, were abſorbed in the ordinary cares of domeſtic life, and for a long time exempted from a great proportion of thoſe evils, which the governed too often experience from the paſſions and follies of ſtateſmen. But all this time they were riſing higher, and though not ſenſible of it, growing to a greater degree of political conſequence.

One of the firſt events which, as an evidenee of their increaſing importance, drew on the Colonies a ſhare of public attention, was the taking of Louiſbourg from
1745. France, while that country was at war with Great Britain. This enterprize was projected by Governor Shirley, of Maſſachuſetts, and undertaken by the ſole authority of the

the legiſlature of that colony. It was carried by only a ſingle vote to make the attempt, but after the adoption of the meaſure, there was an immediate union of all parties, and all were equally zealous in carrying it into execution. The expedition was committed to General Pepperell, and upwards of 5000 men were ſpeedily raiſed for the ſervice, and put under his command. This force arrived at Canſo on the 4th of April: a Britiſh marine force from the Weſt-Indies, commanded by Commodore Warren, which arrived in the ſame month, acted in concert with theſe land forces. Their combined operations were carried on with ſo much judgement, that on the 17th of June the fortreſs capitulated.

The war in which Louiſbourg was taken, was ſcarcely ended when another began, in which the Colonies were diſtinguiſhed parties. The reduction of that fortreſs, by colonial troops, muſt have given both to France and England, enlarged ideas of the value of American territory, and might have given riſe to that eagerneſs for extending the boundaries of their reſpective Colonies, which ſoon after, by a colliſion of claims to the ſame ground, laid the foundation of a bloody war between the two nations. It is neither poſſible nor neceſſary to decide on the rights of either to the lands about which this conteſt began. It is certain that the proſpects of convenience and future advantage had much more influence on both, than the conſiderations of equity. As the contending powers conſidered the rights of the native inhabitants of no account, it is not wonderful that they ſhould not agree in ſettling their own. The war was brought on in the following manner: about the year 1749, a grant of 600,000 acres of land in the neighbourhood of the Ohio, was made out in favour of certain perſons in Weſtminſter, London, and Virginia, who had aſſociated under the title of the Ohio Company. At this time France was in poſſeſſion of the country, on both ſides of the mouth of the Miſſiſſippi, as well as of Canada, and wiſhed to form a communication between theſe two extremities of her territories in North-America. She was, therefore, alarmed at the ſcheme in agitation by the Ohio Company

inasmuch as the land granted to them lay between her northern and southern settlements. Remonstrances against British encroachments, as they were called, having been made in vain by the Governor of Canada, the
1753. French, at length, seized some British subjects who were trading among the Twightwees, a nation of Indians near the Ohio, as intruders on the land of his Most Christian Majesty, and sent them to a fort on the south side of Lake Erie. The Twightwees, by way of retaliation for capturing British traders, whom they deemed their allies, seized three French traders and sent them to Pennsylvania. The French persisting in their claims to the country on the Ohio, as part of Canada, strengthened themselves by erecting new forts in its vicinity, and at length began to seize and plunder every British trader found on any part of that river. Repeated complaints of these violences being made to the Governor of Virginia, it was at length determined to send a suitable person to the French commandant near the Ohio, to demand the reason of his hostile proceedings, and to insist on his evacuating a fort he had lately built. Major Washington, being then but little more than twenty-one years of age, offered his service, which was thankfully accepted. The distance to the French settlement was more than 400 miles, and one half of the rout led through a wilderness, inhabited only by Indians. He nevertheless set out in an uncommonly severe season, attended only by one companion. From Winchester, he proceeded on foot, with his provisions on his back. When he arrived and delivered his message, the French commandant refused to comply, and claimed the country as belonging to the King his master, and declared that he should continue to seize and send as prisoners to Canada, every Englishman that should attempt to trade on the Ohio, or any of its branches. Before Major Washington returned, the Virginians had sent out workmen and materials, to erect a fort at the conflux of the Ohio, and the Monongahela. While they were engaged in this work, the French came upon them, drove them out of the country, and erected a regular fortification on the same spot. These spirited proceedings

proceedings overſet the ſchemes of the Ohio Company, but its members both in England and America were too powerful to brook the diſappointment. It was therefore reſolved to inſtruct the Colonies to oppoſe with arms the encroachments of the French on the Britiſh territories, as theſe weſtern lands were called. In obedience to theſe inſtructions, Virginia raiſed three hundred men, put them under the command of Colonel Waſhington, and ſent them on towards the Ohio. An engagement between them and a party of French took place, in which the latter were defeated. On this Mr. de Villier, the French commandant, marched down with 900 men, beſides Indians, and attacked the Virginians. Colonel Waſhington made a brave defence, behind a ſmall unfiniſhed intrenchment, called Fort Neceſſity; but at length accepted of honourable terms of capitulation. May 28, 1754.

From the eagerneſs diſcovered by both nations for theſe lands, it occurred to all, that a rupture between France and England could not be far diſtant. It was alſo evident to the rulers of the latter, that the Colonies would be the moſt convenient centre of operation for repreſſing French encroachments. To draw forth their colonial reſources, in an uniform ſyſtem of operations, then, for the firſt time, became an object of public attention. To digeſt a plan for this purpoſe, a general meeting of the Governors, and moſt influential members of the Provincial Aſſemblies, was held at Albany. The commiſſioners, at this congreſs, were unanimouſly of opinion, that an union of the Colonies was neceſſary, and they propoſed a plan to the following effect, "that a grand council ſhould be formed of members, to be choſen by the Provincial Aſſemblies, which council, together with a Governor, to be appointed by the Crown, ſhould be authorized to make general laws, and alſo to raiſe money from all the Colonies for their common defence." The leading members of the Provincial Aſſemblies were of opinion, that if this plan was adopted, they could defend themſelves from the French, without any aſſiſtance from Great-Britain. This plan, when ſent to England, was not acceptable to the Miniſtry, and in lieu thereof, they 1754.

proposed, "that the Governors of all the Colonies, attended by one or two members of their respective councils," which were for the most part of royal appointment, "should from time to time concert measures for the whole Colonies; erect forts, and raise troops with a power to draw upon the British treasury in the first instance: but to be ultimately re-imbursed by a tax to be laid on the Colonies by act of Parliament." This was as much disrelished by the Colonists, as the former plan had been by the British Ministry. The principle of some general power, operating on the whole of the Colonies, was still kept in mind, though dropped for the present.

The ministerial plan laid down above was transmitted to Governor Shirley, and by him communicated to Dr. Franklin, and his opinion thereon requested. That sagacious patriot sent to the Governor an answer in writing, with remarks upon the proposed plan, in which by his strong reasoning powers, on the first view of the new subject, he anticipated the substance of a controversy, which for twenty years employed the tongues, pens, and swords of both countries.

The policy of repressing the encroachments of the French on the British Colonies was generally approved, both in England and America. It was therefore resolved to take effectual measures for driving them from the Ohio, and also for reducing Niagara, Crown-Point, and the other posts, which they held within the limits claimed by the King of Great Britain.

To effect the first purpose, General Braddock was sent from Ireland to Virginia, with two regiments, and was there joined by as many more, as amounted, in the whole, to 2200 men. He was a brave man, but destitute of the other qualifications of a great officer. His haughtiness disgusted the Americans, and his severity made him disagreeable to the regular troops. He particularly slighted the country militia, and the Virginia officers. Colonel Washington begged his permission to go before him, and scour the woods with his provincial troops, who were well acquainted with that service, but this was refused. The General with 1400 men pushed on incautiously, till he

fell

fell into an ambuſcade of French and Indians, by whom he was defeated, and mortally wounded. The regulars, as the Britiſh troops at that time were called, were thrown into confuſion, but the provincials, more uſed to Indian fighting, were not ſo much diſconcerted. They continued in an unbroken body under Colonel Waſhington, and by covering the retreat of the regulars, prevented their being cut off entirely. 1755. June 9.

Notwithſtanding theſe hoſtilities, war had not yet been formally declared. Previous to the adoption of that meaſure, Great Britain, contrary to the uſages of nations, made priſoners of 8000 French ſailors. This heavy blow for a long time crippled the naval operations of France, but at the ſame time inſpired her with a deſire to retaliate, whenever a proper opportunity ſhould preſent itſelf. For two or three years, after Braddock's defeat, the war was carried on againſt France without vigour or ſucceſs: but when Mr. Pitt was placed at the head of the miniſtry, public affairs aſſumed a new aſpect. Victory, every where, crowned the Britiſh arms, and, in a ſhort time, the French were diſpoſſeſſed, not only of all the Britiſh territories on which they had encroached, but alſo of Quebec, the capital of their ancient province, 1759.
Canada.

In the courſe of this war, ſome of the Colonies made exertions ſo far beyond their reaſonable quota, as to merit a re-imburſement from the national treaſury; but this was not univerſally the caſe. In conſequence of internal diſputes, together with their greater domeſtic ſecurity, the neceſſary ſupplies had not been raiſed in due time by others of the Provincial Aſſemblies. That a Britiſh Miniſter ſhould depend on colony legiſlatures, for the execution of his plans, did not well accord with the vigorous and deciſive genius of Mr. Pitt, but it was not prudent, by any innovation, to irritate the Colonies, during a war, in which, from local circumſtances, their exertions were peculiarly beneficial. The advantages that would reſult from an ability to draw forth the reſources of the Colonies, by the ſame authority, which commanded the wealth of the Mother Country, might in theſe circumſtances

cumſtances have ſuggeſted the idea of taxing the Colonies by authority of the Britiſh Parliament. Mr. Pitt is ſaid to have told Mr. Franklin, " that when the war cloſed, if he ſhould be in the miniſtry, he would take meaſures to prevent the Colonies from having a power to refuſe or delay the ſupplies that might be wanted for national purpoſes," but did not mention what thoſe meaſures ſhould be. As often as money or men were wanted from the Colonies, a requiſition was made to their legiſlatures. Theſe were generally and cheerfully complied with. Their exertions, with a few exceptions, were great, and manifeſted a ſerious deſire to carry into effect the plans of Great Britain for reducing the power of France.

In the proſecution of this war, the advantages which Great Britain derived from the Colonies were ſeverely felt by her enemies. Upwards of 400 privateers, which were fitted out of the ports of the Britiſh Colonies, ſucceſsfully cruized on French property. Theſe not only ravaged the Weſt India iſlands belonging to his moſt Chriſtian Majeſty, but made many captures on the coaſt of France. Beſides diſtreſſing the French nation by privateering, the Colonies furniſhed 23,800 men, to co-operate with the Britiſh regular forces in North-America. They alſo ſent powerful aids, both in men and proviſions, out of their own limits, which facilitated the reduction of Martinique, and of the Havannah. The ſucceſs of their privateers—the co-operation of their land forces—the convenience of their harbours, and their contiguity to the Weſt India iſlands, made the Colonies great acquiſitions to Britain, and formidable adverſaries to France. From their growing importance the latter had much to fear. Their continued union with Great Britain threatened the ſubverſion of the commerce and American poſſeſſions of France.

After hoſtilities had raged nearly eight years—a ge-
1763. neral peace was concluded on terms, by which France ceded Canada to Great Britain. The Spaniards having alſo taken part in the war, were, at the termination of it, induced to relinquiſh to the ſame power, both Eaſt and Weſt Florida. This peace gave Great Britain poſ-

ſeſſion

ſeſſion of an extent of country equal in dimenſions to ſeveral of the kingdoms of Europe. The poſſeſſion of Canada in the North, and of the two Floridas in the South, made her almoſt ſole miſtreſs of the North-American continent.

This laid a foundation for future greatneſs, which excited the envy and the fears of Europe. Her navy, her commerce, and her manufactures, had greatly increaſed, when ſhe held but a part of the continent, and when ſhe was bounded by the formidable powers of France and Spain. Her probable future greatneſs, when without a rival, and with a growing vent for her manufactures, and increaſing employment for her marine, threatened to deſtroy that balance of power, which European ſovereigns have for a long time endeavoured to preſerve. Kings are republicans with reſpect to each other, and behold with democratic jealouſy, any one of their order towering above the reſt. The aggrandizement of one, tends to excite the combination, or, at leaſt, the wiſhes of many, to reduce him to the common level. From motives of this kind, a great part of Europe not long ſince combined againſt Venice; and ſoon after againſt Louis the XIVth of France. With the ſame ſuſpicious eye was the naval ſuperiority of Great Britain viewed by her neighbours. They were, in general, diſpoſed to favour any convulſion which promiſed a diminution of her overgrown power.

The addition to the Britiſh empire of new provinces, equal in extent to old kingdoms, not only excited the jealouſy of European powers, but occaſioned doubts in the minds of enlightened Britiſh politicians, whether or not ſuch immenſe acquiſitions of territory would contribute to the felicity of the Parent State. They ſaw, or thought they ſaw, the ſeeds of diſunion planted in the too widely extended empire. Power, like all things human, has its limits, and there is a point beyond which the longeſt and ſharpeſt ſword fails of doing execution. To combine in one uniform ſyſtem of government, the extenſive territory then ſubjected to the Britiſh ſway appeared to men of reflection, a work of doubtful practicability: nor were they miſtaken in their conjectures.

The

The ſeeds of diſcord were ſoon planted, and ſpeedily grew up to the rending of the empire. The high notions of liberty and independence, which were nurtured in the Colonies, by their local ſituation, and the ſtate of ſociety in the new world, were increaſed by the removal of hoſtile neighbours. The events of the war had alſo given them ſome experience in military operations, and ſome confidence in their own ability. Foreſeeing their future importance, from the rapid increaſe of their numbers, and extenſion of their commerce, and being extremely jealous of their rights, they readily admitted, and with pleaſure indulged, ideas and ſentiments which were favourable to independence. While combuſtible materials were daily collecting, in the new world, a ſpark to kindle the whole was produced in the old. Nor were there wanting thoſe who, from a jealouſy of Great-Britain, helped to fan the flame.

CHAP. II.

The Origin of the diſputes between Great-Britain and her Colonies, in the Year 1764, *and its Progreſs till* 1773.

FROM the firſt ſettlement of Engliſh America, till the cloſe of the war of 1755, the conduct of Great Britain towards her Colonies affords an uſeful leſſon to thoſe who are diſpoſed to coloniſation. From that æra, it is equally worthy of the attention of thoſe who wiſh for the reduction of great empires to ſmall ones. In the firſt period, Great-Britain regarded the provinces as inſtruments of commerce. Without charging herſelf with the care of their internal police, or ſeeking a revenue from them, ſhe contented herſelf with a monopoly of their trade. She treated them as a judicious mother does her dutiful children. They ſhared in every privilege belonging to her native ſons, and but ſlightly felt the inconveniences of ſubordination. Small was the catalogue of grievances, with which even democratical jealouſy charged the Parent State, antecedent to the period before mentioned.

mentioned. The following appear to have been the chief. 1750.
An act of the Britiſh Parliament for prohibiting the cutting down pitch and tar trees, not being within a fence or encloſure, and ſundry acts which operated againſt colonial manufactures. By one of theſe, it was made illegal after the 24th of June, 1750, to erect in the Colonies, any mill or other engine for ſlitting or rolling of iron, or any plating forge to work with a tilt-hammer, or any furnace for making ſteel. By another, hatters were reſtrained from taking more than two apprentices at a time, or any for leſs than ſeven years, and from employing negroes in the buſineſs. The Coloniſts were alſo prohibited from tranſporting hats, and home manufactured woollens, from one province to another. Theſe regulations were for the moſt part evaded, but if carried into execution, would have been ſlightly inconvenient, and only to a few. The articles, the manufacturing of which were thus prohibited, could be purchaſed at a cheaper rate from England, and the hands who made them, could be as well employed in agriculture.

Though theſe reſtrictions were a ſpecies of affront, 1763.
by their implying, that the Coloniſts had not ſenſe enough to diſcover their own intereſt, and though they ſeemed calculated to cruſh their native talents, and to keep them in a conſtant ſtate of inferiority, without any hope of arriving at thoſe advantages, to which, by the native riches of their country, they were prompted to aſpire, yet if no other grievances had been ſuperadded to what exiſted in 1763, theſe would have been ſoon forgotten, for their preſſure was neither great, nor univerſal. The good reſulting to the Colonies, from their connection with Great-Britain, infinitely outweighed the evil.

Till the year 1764, the colonial regulations ſeemed to 1764.
have no other object but the common good of the whole empire; exceptions to the contrary were few, and had no appearance of ſyſtem. When the approach of the Colonies to manhood made them more capable of reſiſting impoſitions, Great Britain changed the ancient ſyſtem, under which her Colonies had long flouriſhed. When policy would rather have dictated relaxation of authority, ſhe roſe in her demands, and multiplied her reſtraints.

From

From the conqueſt of Canada, in 1759, ſome have ſuppoſed, that France began ſecretly to lay ſchemes for wreſting thoſe Colonies from Great Britain which ſhe was not able to conquer. Others alledge, that from that period the Coloniſts, releaſed from all fears of dangerous neighbours, fixed their eyes on independence, and took ſundry ſteps preparatory to the adoption of that meaſure. Without recurring to either of theſe opinions, the known ſelfiſhneſs of human nature is ſufficient to account for that demand on the one ſide, and that refuſal on the other, which occaſioned the revolution. It was natural for Great Britain to wiſh for an extenſion of her authority over the Colonies, and equally ſo for them, on their approach to maturity, to be more impatient of ſubordination, and to reſiſt every innovation, for increaſing the degree of their dependence.

The ſad ſtory of Colonial oppreſſion commenced in the year 1764. Great Britain then adopted new regulations reſpecting her Colonies, which, after diſturbing the ancient harmony of the two countries for about twelve years, terminated in a diſmemberment of the empire.

1764. Theſe conſiſted in reſtricting their former commerce, but more eſpecially in ſubjecting them to taxation, by the Britiſh Parliament. By adhering to the ſpirit of her navigation act, in the courſe of a century, the trade of Great-Britain had increaſed far beyond the expectation of her moſt ſanguine ſons, but by rigidly enforcing the ſtrict letter of the ſame, in a different ſituation of public affairs, effects directly the reverſe were produced.

From the enterpriſing commercial ſpirit of the Coloniſts, the trade of America, after filling all its proper channels, ſwelled out on every ſide, and overflowed its proper banks with a rich redundance. In the cure of evils, which are cloſely connected with the cauſes of national proſperity, vulgar precaution ought not to be employed. In ſeverely checking a contraband trade, which was only the overflowing of an extenſive fair trade, the remedy was worſe than the diſeaſe.

For ſome time before and after the termination of the war of 1755, a conſiderable intercourſe had been carried on

on between the Britiſh and Spaniſh Colonies, conſiſting of the manufactures of Great Britain, imported by the former, and ſold by the latter, by which the Britiſh Colonies acquired gold and ſilver, and were enabled to make remittances to the Mother Country. This trade, though it did not claſh with the ſpirit of the Britiſh navigation laws, was forbidden by their letter. On account of the advantages which all parties, and particularly Great-Britain, reaped from this intercourſe, it had long been winked at by perſons in power; but at the period before-mentioned, ſome new regulations were adopted, by which it was almoſt deſtroyed. This was effected by armed cutters, whoſe commanders were enjoined to take the uſual cuſtom-houſe oaths, and to act in the capacity of revenue officers. So ſudden a ſtoppage of an accuſtomed and beneficial commerce, by an unuſually rigid execution of old laws, was a ſerious blow to the Northern Colonies. It was their misfortune, that though they ſtood in need of vaſt quantities of Britiſh manufactures, their country produced very little that afforded a direct remittance to pay for them. They were, therefore, under a neceſſity of ſeeking elſewhere, a market for their produce, and by a circuitous route, acquiring the means of ſupporting their credit with the Mother Country. This they found by trading with the Spaniſh and French Colonies in their neighbourhood. From them they acquired gold, ſilver, and valuable commodities, the ultimate profits of which centered in Great Britain. This intercourſe gave life to buſineſs of every denomination, and eſtabliſhed a reciprocal circulation of money and merchandize, to the benefit of all parties concerned. Why a trade eſſential to the Colonies, and which, ſo far from being detrimental, was indirectly advantageous to Great-Britain, ſhould be ſo narrowly watched, and ſo ſeverely reſtrained, could not be accounted for by the Americans, without ſuppoſing that the rulers of Great Britain were jealous of their adventurous commercial ſpirit, and of their increaſing number of ſeamen. Their actual ſufferings were great, but their apprehenſions were greater. Inſtead of viewing the Parent State as they had long done, in the light

1764. light of an affectionate mother, they conceived her, as beginning to be influenced by the narrow views of an illiberal step-dame.

After the 29th of September, 1764, the trade between the British, and the French, and Spanish Colonies, was in some degree legalised, but under circumstances, that brought no relief to the Colonists, for it was loaded with such enormous duties, as were equivalent to a prohibition. The preamble to the act for this purpose was alarming. "Whereas it is just and necessary, that a revenue be raised in America, for defraying the expences of defending, protecting, and securing the same, We, the Commons, &c. towards raising the same, give, and grant unto your Majesty, the sum of" (here followed a specification of duties upon foreign clayed sugar, indigo, and coffee, of foreign produce, upon all wines, except French, upon all wrought silk, and all calicoes, and upon every gallon of melasses and syrups, being the produce of a colony, not under the dominion of his Majesty). It was also enacted, that the monies arising from the importation of these articles into the Colonies, should be paid into the receipt of his Majesty's exchequer, there to be entered separate, and reserved, to be disposed of by Parliament, towards defraying the necessary expences of defending, protecting, and securing America. Till that act passed, no act avowedly for the purpose of revenue, and with the ordinary title and recital of such, was to be found in the parliamentary statute book. The wording of it made the Colonists fear, that the Parliament would go on, in charging them with such taxes as they pleased, and for the support of such military force as they should think proper. The act was the more disgusting, because the monies arising from it were ordered to be paid in specie, and regulations were adopted, against colonial paper money. To obstruct the avenues of acquiring gold and silver, and at the same time to interdict the use of paper money, appeared to the Colonists as a farther evidence, that their interests were either misunderstood or disregarded. The imposition of duties, for the purpose of raising a revenue in America, was considered as a dangerous innovation, but the methods adopted for securing their collection, were

were refented as arbitrary and unconftitutional. It was enacted by Parliament, that whenever offences fhould be committed againft the acts, which impofed them, the profecutor might bring his action for the penalty in the courts of admiralty, by which means the defendant loft the advantage of being tried by a jury, and was fubjected to the neceffity of having his cafe decided upon by a fingle man, a creature of the crown, whofe falary was to be paid out of forfeitures adjudged by himfelf; and alfo according to a courfe of law, which exempted the profecutor from the trouble of proving his accufation, and obliged the defendant, either to evince his innocence, or to fuffer. By thefe regulations, the guards which the conftitution had placed round property, and the fences, which the anceftors of both countries had erected againft arbitrary power, were thrown down, as far as they concerned the Colonifts, charged with violating the laws, for raifing a revenue in America.

They who directed public affairs in Great Britain feared, that if the collection of thefe duties was enforced only in the cuftomary way, payment would be often eluded. To obviate that difpofition which the Colonifts difcovered to fcreen one another, in difobeying offenfive acts of Parliament, regulations were adopted, bearing hard on their conftitutional rights. Unwilling as the Colonifts were to be excluded by the impofition of enormous duties, from an accuftomed and beneficial line of bufinefs, it is not wonderful that they were difpofed to reprefent the innovations of the Mother Country, in the moft unfavourable point of view. The heavy loffes to which many individuals were fubjected, and the general diftrefs of the mercantile intereft in feveral of the oldeft Colonies, foured the minds of many. That the Mother Country fhould infringe her own conftitution, to cramp the commerce of her Colonies, was a fruitful fubject of declamation: but thefe murmurings would have evaporated in words, had Great Britain proceeded to no farther innovations. Inftead of this, fhe adopted the novel idea of raifing from the Colonies an efficient revenue, by direct internal taxes, laid by authority of her Parliament.

Though

Though all the Colonists disrelished, and many, from the pressure of actual sufferings, complained of the British restrictions on their manufactures and commerce, yet a great majority was disposed to submit to both. Most of them acknowledged that the exercise of these powers was incident to the sovereignty of the Mother Country, especially when guarded by an implied contract, that they were to be only used for the common benefit of the empire. It was generally allowed, that as the planting of colonies was not designed to erect an independent government, but to extend an old one, the Parent State had a right to restrain their trade in every way, which conduced to the common emolument.

They for the most part considered the Mother Country as authorised to name ports and nations, to which alone their merchandize should be carried, and with which alone they should trade: but the novel claim of taxing them without their consent, was universally reprobated, as contrary to their natural, chartered, and constitutional rights. In opposition to it, they not only alledged the general principles of liberty, but ancient usage. During the first 150 years of their existence, they had been left to tax themselves and in their own way. If there were any exceptions to this general rule, they were too inconsiderable to merit notice. In the war of 1755, the events of which were fresh in the recollection of every one, the Parliament had in no instance attempted to raise either men or money in the Colonies by its own authority. As the claim of taxation on one side, and the refusal of it on the other, was the very hinge on which the revolution turned, it merits a particular discussion.

Colonies were formerly planted by warlike nations, to keep their enemies in awe, to give vent to a surplus of inhabitants, or to discharge a number of discontented and troublesome citizens. But in modern ages, the spirit of violence, being in some measure sheathed in commerce, colonies have been settled, by the nations of Europe, for the purposes of trade. These were to be attained by their raising, for the Mother Country, such commo-

commodities as ſhe did not produce, and ſupplying themſelves from her with ſuch things as they wanted. In ſubſerviency to theſe views, Great Britain planted Colonies, and made laws, obliging them to carry to her all their products which ſhe wanted, and all their raw materials which ſhe choſe to work up. Beſides this reſtriction, ſhe forbad them to procure manufactures from any other part of the globe, or even the products of European countries, which could rival her, without being firſt brought to her ports. By a variety of laws ſhe regulated their trade, in ſuch a manner, as was thought moſt conducive to their mutual advantage, and her own particular welfare. This principle of commercial monopoly ran through no leſs than twenty-nine acts of Parliament, from 1660 to 1764. In all theſe acts the ſyſtem of commerce was eſtabliſhed, as that, from which alone, their contributions to the ſtrength of the empire were expected. During this whole period, a parliamentary revenue was no part of the object of coloniſation. Accordingly, in all the laws which regarded them, the technical words of revenue laws were avoided. Such have uſually a title purporting their being "grants," and the words "give and grant," uſually precede their enacting clauſes, Although duties were impoſed on America by previous acts of Parliament, no one title of "giving an aid to his Majeſty," or any other of the uſual titles to revenue acts, was to be found in any of them. They were intended as regulations of trade, and not as ſources of national ſupplies. Till the year 1764, all ſtood on commercial regulation and reſtraint.

While Great Britain attended to this firſt ſyſtem of coloniſation, her American ſettlements, though expoſed in unknown climates, and unexplored wilderneſſes, grew and flouriſhed, and in the ſame proportion the trade and riches of the Mother Country increaſed. Some eſtimate may be made of this increaſe, from the following ſtatement: the whole export trade of England, including that to the Colonies, in the years 1704, amounted to £.6,509,000 ſterling: but ſo immenſely had the Colonies increaſed, that the exports to them alone

alone in the year 1772, amounted to £.6,022,132 sterling, and they were yearly increasing. In the short space of sixty-eighty years, the Colonies added nearly as much to the export commerce of Great Britain, as she had grown to by a progressive increase of improvement in 1700 years. And this increase of colonial trade was not at the expence of the general trade of the kingdom, for that increased in the same time from six millions to sixteen millions.

In this auspicious period, the Mother Country contented herself with exercising her supremacy in superintending the general concerns of the Colonies, and in harmonising the commercial interest of the whole empire. To this the most of them bowed down with such a filial submission as demonstrated that they, though not subjected to parliamentary taxes, could be kept in due subordination, and in perfect subserviency to the grand views of colonisation.

Immediately after the peace of Paris, 1763, a new scene was opened. The national debt of Great Britain then amounted to 148 millions, for which an interest of nearly five millions was annually paid. While the British Minister was digesting plans for diminishing this amazing load of debt, he conceived the idea of raising a substantial revenue in the British Colonies, from taxes laid by the Parliament of the Parent State. On the one hand it was urged, that the late war originated on account of the Colonies—that it was reasonable, more especially as it had terminated in a manner so favourable to their interest, that they should contribute to the defraying of the expences it had occasioned. Thus far both parties were agreed; but Great Britain contended, that her Parliament, as the supreme power, was constitutionally vested with an authority to lay them on every part of the empire. This doctrine, plausible in itself, and conformable to the letter of the British constitution, when the whole dominions were represented in one assembly, was reprobated in the Colonies, as contrary to the spirit of the same government, when the empire became so far extended, as to have many distinct representative assemblies. The Colonists believed that the chief excellence of the

British

Britiſh conſtitution conſiſted in the right of the ſubjects to grant, or withhold taxes, and in their having a ſhare in enacting the laws by which they were to be bound.

They conceived, that the ſuperiority of the Britiſh conſtitution, to other forms of government was, not becauſe their ſupreme council was called a Parliament, but becauſe the people had a ſhare in it by appointing members, who conſtituted one of its conſtituent branches, and without whoſe concurrence, no law, binding on them, could be enacted. In the Mother Country, it was aſſerted to be eſſential to the unity of the empire, that the Britiſh Parliament ſhould have a right of taxation over every part of the royal dominions. In the Colonies, it was believed, that taxation and repreſentation were inſeparable, and that they could neither be free nor happy if their property could be taken from them without their conſent. The common people in America reaſoned on this ſubject in a ſummary way: " If a Britiſh Parliament," ſaid they, " in which we are unrepreſented, and over which we have no controul, can take from us any part of our property, by direct taxation, they may take as much as they pleaſe, and we have no ſecurity for any thing that remains, but a forbearance on their part, leſs likely to be exerciſed in our favour, as they lighten themſelves of the burthens of government, in the ſame proportion that they impoſe them on us." They well knew, that communities of mankind, as well as individuals, have a ſtrong propenſity to impoſe on others, when they can do it with impunity, and, eſpecially, when there is a proſpect, that the impoſition will be attended with advantage to themſelves. The Americans, from that jealouſy of their liberties which their local ſituation nurtured, and which they inherited from their forefathers, viewed the excluſive right of laying taxes on themſelves, free from extraneous influence, in the ſame light as the Britiſh Parliament views its peculiar privilege of raiſing money, independent of the crown. The Parent State appeared to the Coloniſts to ſtand in the ſame relation to their local legiſlatures, as the monarch of Great Britain to the Britiſh

Parliament. His prerogative is limited by that palladium of the people's liberty, the exclufive privilege of granting their own money. While this right refts in the hands of the people, their liberties are fecured. In the fame manner reafoned the Colonifts, "in order to be ftiled freemen, our local affemblies, elected by ourfelves, muft enjoy the exclufive privilege of impofing taxes upon us." They contended, that men fettled in foreign parts to better their condition, and not to fubmit their liberties—to continue the equals, not to become the flave of their lefs adventurous fellow-citizens, and that by the novel doctrine of parliamentary power, they were degraded from being the fubjects of a King, to the low condition of being fubjects of fubjects. They argued, that it was effentially involved in the idea of property, that the poffeffor had fuch a right therein, that it was a contradiction to fuppofe any other man, or body of men, poffeffed a right to take it from him without his confent. Precedents, in the Hiftory of England, juftified this mode of reafoning. The love of property ftrengthened it, and it had a peculiar force on the minds of Colonifts, 3000 miles removed from the feat of government, and growing up to maturity, in a new world, where, from the extent of country, and the ftate of fociety, even the neceffary reftraints of civil government were impatiently borne. On the other hand, the people of Great Britain revolted againft the claims of the Colonifts. Educated in habits of fubmiffion to parliamentary taxation, they conceived it to be the height of contumacy for their Colonifts to refufe obedience to the power, which they had been taught to revere. Not adverting to the common intereft which exifted between the people of Great Britain and their reprefentatives, they believed, that the fame right exifted, although the fame community of interefts was wanting. The pride of an opulent, conquering nation, aided this mode of reafoning. "What," faid they, "fhall we, who have fo lately humbled France and Spain, be dictated to by our own Colonifts? Shall our fubjects, educated by our care, and defended by our arms, prefume to queftion the rights of Parliament, to which we are obliged to fubmit?"

mit?" Reflections of this kind, congenial to the natural vanity of the human heart, operated so extensively, that the people of Great Britain spoke of their Colonies and of their Colonists, as a kind of possession annexed to their persons. The love of power and of property on the one side of the Atlantic were opposed by the same powerful passions on the other.

The disposition to tax the Colonies was also strengthened by exaggerated accounts of their wealth. It was said, "that the American planters lived in affluence, and with inconsiderable taxes, while the inhabitants of Great Britain were borne down by such oppressive burdens as to make a bare subsistence a matter of extreme difficulty." The officers who have served in America, during the late war, contributed to this delusion. Their observations were founded on what they had seen in cities, and at a time, when large sums were spent by government, in support of fleets and armies, and when American commodities were in great demand. To treat with attention those who came to fight for them, and also to gratify their own pride, the Colonists had made a parade of their riches, by frequently and sumptuously entertaining the gentlemen of the British army. These, judging from what they saw, without considering the general state of the country, concurred in representing the Colonists as very able to contribute largely towards defraying the common expences of the empire.

The charters, which were supposed to contain the principles on which the Colonies were founded, became the subject of serious investigation on both sides. One clause was found to run through the whole of them, except that which had been granted to Mr. Penn; this was a declaration, "that the emigrants to America should enjoy the same privileges, as if they had remained, or had been born within the realm;" but such was the subtilty of disputants, that both parties construed this general principle so as to favour their respective opinions. The American patriots contended, that as English freeholders could not be taxed but by representatives, in chusing whom they had a vote, neither could the Colonists: but it

it was replied, that if the Coloniſts had remained in England, they muſt have been bound to pay the taxes impoſed by Parliament. It was therefore inferred, that though taxed by that authority, they loſt none of the rights of native Engliſhmen reſiding at home. The partiſans of the Mother Country could ſee nothing in charters, but ſecurity againſt taxes by royal authority. The Americans, adhering to the ſpirit more than to the letter, viewed their charters as a ſhield againſt all taxes, not impoſed by repreſentatives of their own choice. This conſtruction they contended to be expreſsly recognized by the charter of Maryland. In that, King Charles bound both himſelf and his ſucceſſors, not to aſſent to any bill, ſubjecting the inhabitants to internal taxation by external legiſlation.

The nature and extent of the connection between Great Britain and America was a great conſtitutional queſtion, involving many intereſts, and the general principles of civil liberty. To decide this, recourſe was in vain had to parchment authorities, made at a diſtant time, when neither the grantors nor grantees of American territory had in contemplation any thing like the preſent ſtate of the two countries.

Great and flouriſhing Colonies, daily increaſing in numbers, and already grown to the magnitude of a nation, planted at an immenſe diſtance, and governed by conſtitutions reſembling that of the country from which they ſprung, were novelties in the hiſtory of the world. To combine Colonies, ſo circumſtanced, in one uniform ſyſtem of government with the Parent State, required a great knowledge of mankind, and an extenſive comprehenſion of things. It was an arduous buſineſs, far beyond the graſp of ordinary ſtatement, whoſe minds were narrowed by the formalities of laws, or the trammels of office. An original genius, unfettered with precedents, and exalted with juſt ideas of the rights of human nature, and the obligations of univerſal benevolence, might have ſtruck out a middle line, which would have ſecured as much liberty to the Colonies, and as great a degree of ſupremacy to the Parent State, as their common good required: But

the helm of Great Britain was not in ſuch hands. The ſpirit of the Britiſh conſtitution on the one hand revolted at the idea, that the Britiſh Parliament ſhould exercise the ſame unlimited authority over the unrepreſented Colonies, which it exerciſed over the inhabitants of Great Britain. The Coloniſts on the other hand did not claim a total exemption from its authority. They in general allowed the Mother Country a certain undefined prerogative over them, and acquieſced in the right of Parliament to make many acts, binding them in many ſubjects of internal policy, and regulating their trade. Where parliamentary ſupremacy ended, and at what point colonial independency began, was not aſcertained. Happy would it have been had the queſtion never been agitated, but much more ſo, had it been compromiſed by an amicable compact, without the horrors of a civil war.

The Engliſh Colonies were originally eſtabliſhed, not for the ſake of revenue, but on the principles of a commercial monopoly. While England purſued trade and forgot revenue, her commerce increaſed at leaſt fourfold. The Colonies took off the manufactures of Great Britain, and paid for them with proviſions or raw materials. They united their arms in war, their commerce and their councils in peace, without nicely inveſtigating the terms on which the connection of the two countries depended.

A perfect calm in the political world is not long to be expected. The reciprocal happineſs, both of Great Britain and of the Colonies, was too great to be of long duration. The calamities of the war of 1755 had ſcarcely ended, when the germ of another war was planted, which ſoon grew up and produced deadly fruit.

At that time ſundry reſolutions paſſed the Britiſh Parliament relative to the impoſition of a ſtamp duty in America, which gave a general alarm. By them the right, the equity, the policy, and even the neceſſity of taxing the Colonies was formally avowed. Theſe reſolutions being conſidered as the preface of a ſyſtem of American revenue, were deemed an introduction to evils of much greater magnitude. They opened a proſpect of oppreſſion, 1764.

boundless in extent, and endless in duration. They were nevertheless not immediately followed by any legislative act. Time and an invitation were given to the Americans to suggest any other mode of taxation that might be equivalent in its produce to the stamp act: but they objected, not only to the mode, but the principle, and several of their assemblies, though in vain, petitioned against it. An American revenue was in England a very popular measure. The cry in favour of it was so strong, as to confound and silence the voice of petitions to the contrary. The equity of compelling the Americans to contribute to the common expences of the empire satisfied many, who, without inquiring into the policy or justice of taxing their unrepresented fellow-subjects, readily assented to the measures adopted by the Parliament for this purpose. The prospect of easing their own burdens, at the expence of the Colonists, dazzled the eyes of gentlemen of landed interest so as to keep out of their view the probable consequences of the innovation.

The omnipotence of Parliament was so familiar a phrase on both sides of the Atlantic, that few in America, and still fewer in Great Britain, were impressed in the first instance, with any idea of the illegality of taxing the Colonists.

The illumination on that subject was gradual. The resolutions in favour of an American stamp act, which passed in March 1764, met with no opposition. In the course of the year which intervened between these resolutions, and the passing of a law grounded upon them, the subject was better understood, and constitutional objections against the measure were urged by several, both in Great Britain and America. This astonished and chagrined the British ministry: but as the principle of taxing America had been for some time determined upon, they were unwilling to give it up. Impelled by partiality for a long cherished idea, Mr. Grenville brought into the House of Commons his long expected bill, for laying a stamp duty in America. By this, after passing through the usual forms, it was enacted, that the instruments

March, 1765.

ments

ments of writing which are in daily ufe among a commercial people, fhould be null and void, unlefs they were executed on ftamped paper or parchment, charged with a duty impofed by the Britifh Parliament.

When the bill was brought in, Mr. Charles Townfend concluded a fpeech in its favour, with words to the following effect, "And now will thefe Americans, children planted by our care, nourifhed up by our indulgence, till they are grown to a degree of ftrength and opulence, and protected by our arms, will they grudge to contribute their mite to relieve us from the heavy weight of that burden which we lie under?" To which Colonel Barré replied, "They planted by your care? No, your oppreffions planted them in America. They fled from tyranny to a then uncultivated and inhofpitable country, where they expofed themfelves to almoft all the hardfhips to which human nature is liable; and, among others, to the cruelty of a favage foe the moft fubtle, and I will take upon me to fay, the moft formidable of any people upon the face of God's earth; and yet, actuated by principles of true Englifh liberty, they met all hardfhips with pleafure compared with thofe they fuffered in their own country, from the hands of thofe that fhould have been their friends.—They nourifhed up by your indulgence? They grew by your neglect of them. As foon as you began to care about them, that care was exercifed in fending perfons to rule them in one department and another, who were, perhaps, the deputies of deputies to fome members of this Houfe, fent to fpy out their liberties, to mifreprefent their actions, and to prey upon them.—Men, whofe behaviour on many occafions, has caufed the blood of thofe fons of liberty to recoil within them.—Men promoted to the higheft feats of juftice, fome who to my knowledge were glad, by going to a foreign country, to efcape being brought to the bar of a court of juftice in their own.—They protected by your arms? They have nobly taken up arms in your defence, have exerted a valour, amidft their conftant and laborious induftry, for the defence of a country whofe frontier was drenched in blood, while its interior parts yielded all its little favings to your emolument. And believe

lieve me, remember I this day told you ſo, that ſame ſpirit of freedom which actuated that people at firſt will accompany them ſtill: but prudence forbids me to explain myſelf farther. God knows, I do not at this time ſpeak from any motives of party heat; what I deliver are the genuine ſentiments of my heart. However ſuperior to me in general knowledge and experience the reſpectable body of this Houſe may be, yet I claim to know more of America than moſt of you, having ſeen and been converſant in that country. The people, I believe, are as truly loyal as any ſubjects the King has, but a people jealous of their liberties, and who will vindicate them, if ever they ſhould be violated: but the ſubject is too delicate—I will ſay no more."

During the debate on the bill, the ſupporters of it inſiſted much on the Colonies being virtually repreſented in the ſame manner as Leeds, Halifax, and ſome other towns were. A recurrence to this plea was a virtual acknowledgement, that there ought not to be taxation without repreſentation. It was replied, that the connection between the electors and non-electors of Parliament in Great Britain was ſo interwoven, from both being equally liable to pay the ſame common tax, as to give ſome ſecurity of property to the latter; but with reſpect to taxes laid by the Britiſh Parliament, and paid by the Americans, the ſituation of the parties was reverſed. Inſtead of both parties bearing a proportionable ſhare of the ſame common burden, what was laid on the one, was exactly ſo much taken off from the other.

1765. The bill met with no oppoſition in the Houſe of Lords, and on the 22d of March, it received the royal aſſent. The night after it paſſed, Dr. Franklin wrote to Mr. Charles Thomſon, "The ſun of liberty is ſet, you muſt light up the candles of induſtry and œconomy." Mr. Thomſon anſwered, "He was apprehenſive that other lights would be the conſequence," and foretold the oppoſition that ſhortly took place. On its being ſuggeſted from authority, that the ſtamp officers would not be ſent from Great Britain; but ſelected from among the Americans, the Colony agents were deſired to point out proper perſons

ſons for the purpoſe. They generally nominated their friends, which affords a preſumptive proof, that they ſuppoſed the act would have gone down. In this opinion they were far from being ſingular. That the Coloniſts would be ultimately obliged to ſubmit to the ſtamp act, was at firſt commonly believed, both in England and America. The framers of it, in particular, flattered themſelves that the confuſion which would ariſe upon the diſuſe of writings, and the inſecurity of property, which would reſult from uſing any other than that required by law, would compel the Colonies, however reluctant, to uſe the ſtamp paper, and conſequently to pay the taxes impoſed thereon: they therefore boaſted that it was a law which would execute itſelf. By the terms of the ſtamp act, it was not to take effect till the firſt day of November, a period of more than ſeven months after 1765. its paſſing. This gave the Coloniſts an opportunity for leiſurely canvaſſing the new ſubject, and examining it fully on every ſide. In the firſt part of this interval, ſtruck with aſtoniſhment, they lay in ſilent conſternation, and could not determine what courſe to purſue. By degrees they recovered their recollection. Virginia led the way May 28, in oppoſition to the ſtamp act. Mr. Patrick Henry 1765. brought into the Houſe of Burgeſſes of that Colony, the following reſolutions, which were ſubſtantially adopted:

Reſolved, That the firſt adventurers, ſettlers of this his Majeſty's Colony and dominion of Virginia, brought with them and tranſmitted to their poſterity, and all other his Majeſty's ſubjects, ſince inhabiting in this his Majeſty's ſaid Colony, all the liberties, privileges, and immunities that have at any time been held, enjoyed, and poſſeſſed by the people of Great Britain.

Reſolved, That by two royal charters, granted by King James the Firſt, the Colonies aforeſaid are declared, and entitled to all liberties, privileges, and immunities of denizens, and natural ſubjects, to all intents and purpoſes, as if they had been abiding, and born within the realm of England.

Reſolved, That his Majeſty's liege people, of this his ancient Colony, have enjoyed the rights of being thus governed

1765. governed by their own aſſembly, in the article of taxes, and internal police, and that the ſame have never been forfeited, or yielded up, but have been conſtantly recognized by the King and people of Britain.

Reſolved, therefore, That the general aſſembly of this Colony, together with his Majeſty, or his ſubſtitutes, have, in their repreſentative capacity, the only excluſive right and power, to lay taxes and impoſts upon the inhabitants of this Colony, and that every attempt to veſt ſuch power in any other perſon or perſons whatſoever, than the general aſſembly aforeſaid, is illegal, and unconſtitutional, and unjuſt, and hath a manifeſt tendency to deſtroy Britiſh, as well as American liberty.

Reſolved, That his Majeſty's liege people, the inhabitants of this Colony, are not bound to yield obedience to any law or ordinance whatever, deſigned to impoſe any taxation whatever upon them, other than the laws or ordinances of the general aſſembly aforeſaid.

Reſolved, That any perſon, who ſhall, by ſpeaking or writing, aſſert or maintain, that any perſon or perſons, other than the general aſſembly of this Colony, have any right or power to impoſe, or lay any taxation on the people here, ſhall be deemed an enemy to this his Majeſty's Colony.

Upon reading theſe reſolutions, the boldneſs and novelty of them affected one of the members to ſuch a degree, that he cried out, "Treaſon! Treaſon!" They were, nevertheleſs, well received by the people, and immediately forwarded to the other provinces. They circulated extenſively, and gave a ſpring to all the diſcontented. Till they appeared, moſt were of opinion, that the act would be quietly adopted. Murmurs, indeed, were common, but they ſeemed to be ſuch, as would ſoon die away. The countenance of ſo reſpectable a Colony as Virginia, confirmed the wavering, and emboldened the timid. Oppoſition to the ſtamp act, from that period, aſſumed a bolder face. The fire of liberty blazed forth from the preſs; ſome well-judged publications ſet the rights of the Coloniſts in a plain, but ſtrong point of view. The tongues and the pens of the well-informed citizens

citizens laboured in kindling the latent ſparks of patriotiſm. The flame ſpread from breaſt to breaſt, till the conflagration became general. In this buſineſs, New-England had a principal ſhare. The inhabitants of that part of America, in particular, conſidered their obligations to the Mother Country for paſt favours, to be very inconſiderable. They were fully informed, that their foreſathers were driven by perſecution to the woods of America, and had there, without any expence to the Parent State, effected a ſettlement amidſt rude creation. Their reſentment for the invaſion of their accuſtomed right of taxation was not ſo much mitigated by the recollection of late favours, as it was heightened by the tradition of grievous ſufferings, to which their anceſtors, by the rulers of England, had been ſubjected. The deſcendants of the exiled, perſecuted, Puritans, of the laſt century, oppoſed the ſtamp act with the ſame ſpirit with which their foreſathers were actuated, when they ſet themſelves againſt the arbitrary impoſitions of the Houſe of Stuart. 1765.

The heavy burdens, which the operation of the ſtamp act would have impoſed on the Coloniſts, together with the precedent it would eſtabliſh of future exactions, furniſhed the American patriots with arguments, calculated as well to move the paſſions, as to convince the judgements of their Fellow Coloniſts. In great warmth they exclaimed, "If the Parliament has a right to levy the ſtamp duties, they may, by the ſame authority, lay on us impoſts, exciſes, and other taxes, without end, till their rapacity is ſatisfied, or our abilities are exhauſted. We cannot, at future elections, diſplace theſe men, who ſo laviſhly grant away our property. Their ſeats and their power are independent of us, and it will reſt with their generoſity where to ſtop, in transferring the expences of government from their own to our ſhoulders."

It was fortunate for the liberties of America, that news-papers were the ſubject of a heavy ſtamp duty. Printers, when uninfluenced by government, have generally arranged themſelves on the ſide of liberty, nor are they leſs remarkable for attention to the profits of their profeſſion. A ſtamp duty, which openly invaded the firſt, and

1765. and threatened a great diminution of the last, provoked their united zealous opposition. They daily presented to the public, original dissertations, tending to prove, that if the stamp act was suffered to operate, the liberties of America were at end, and their property virtually transferred to their Trans-Atlantic fellow-subjects. The writers among the Americans, seriously alarmed for the fate of their country, came forward, with essays, to prove, that agreeably to the British Constitution, taxation and representation were inseparable, that the only constitutional mode of raising money from the Colonists was by acts of their own legislatures, that the Crown possessed no farther power than that of requisition, and that the parliamentary right of taxation was confined to the Mother Country, and there originated, from the natural right of man, to do what he pleased with his own, transferred by consent from the electors of Great Britain to those whom they chose to represent them in Parliament. They also insisted much on the misapplication of public money by the British ministry. Great pains were taken to inform the Colonists of the large sums annually bestowed on pensioned favourites, and for the various purposes of bribery. Their passions were inflamed by high-coloured representations of the hardship of being obliged to pay the earnings of their industry into a British treasury, well known to be a fund for corruption.

The writers on the American side were opposed by arguments, drawn from the unity of the empire; the necessity of one supreme head, the unlimited power of Parliament, and the great numbers in the Mother Country, who, though legally disqualified from voting at elections, were, nevertheless, bound to pay the taxes imposed by the representatives of the nation. To these objections it was replied, that the very idea of subordination of parts excluded the notion of simple, undivided unity. That as England was the head, she could not be the head and the members too—that in all extensive empires, where the dead uniformity of servitude did not prevent, the subordinate parts had many local privileges and immunities—that between these privileges and the supreme

common

common authority, the line was extremely nice; but nevertheless, the supremacy of the head had an ample field of exercise, without arrogating to itself the disposal of the property of the unrepresented subordinate parts. To the assertion, that the power of Parliament was unlimited, the Colonists replied, that before it could constitutionally exercise that power, it must be constitutionally formed, and that, therefore, it must at least, in one of its branches, be constituted by the people over whom it exercised unlimited power. That with respect to Great Britain, it was so constituted,—with respect to America, it was not. They therefore inferred, that its power ought not to be the same over both countries. They argued also, that the delegation of the people was the source of power in regard to taxation, and as that delegation was wanting in America, they concluded, the right of Parliament to grant away their property could not exist. That the defective representation in Great Britain should be urged as an argument for taxing the Americans, without any representation at all, proved the incroaching nature of power. Instead of convincing the Colonists of the propriety of their submission, it demonstrated the wisdom of their resistance; for, said they, "one invasion of natural right is made the justification of another, much more injurious and oppressive." 1765.

The advocates for parliamentary taxation laid great stress on the rights, supposed to accrue to Great Britain, on the score of her having reared up and protected the English settlements in America at great expence. It was, on the other hand, contended by the Colonists, that in all the wars which were common to both countries, they had taken their full share, but in all their own dangers, in all the difficulties belonging separately to their situation, which did not immediately concern Great Britain, they were left to themselves, and had to struggle through a hard infancy; and in particular, to defend themselves, without any aid from the Parent State, against the numerous savages in their vicinity. That when France had made war upon them, it was not on their own account, but as appendages to Great Britain. That confining their trade for

1765. for the exclusive benefit of the Parent State, was an ample compensation for her protection, and a sufficient equivalent for their exemption from parliamentary taxation. That the taxes imposed on the inhabitants of Great Britain were incorporated with their manufactures, and ultimately fell on the Colonists, who were the consumers.

The advocates for the stamp act also contended, that as the Parliament was charged with the defence of the Colonies, it ought to possess the means of defraying the expences incurred thereby. The same argument had been used by King Charles the First, in support of ship money; and it was now answered in the same manner, as it was by the patriots of that day. "That the people who were defended or protected, were the fittest to judge of and to provide the means of defraying the expences incurred on that account." In the mean time, the minds of the Americans underwent a total transformation. Instead of their late peaceable and steady attachment to the British nation, they were daily advancing to the opposite extreme. A new mode of displaying resentment against the friends of the stamp act began in Massachusetts, and was followed by the other Colonies. A few gentlemen hung out, early in the morning, on the limb of
1765. Aug. 14. a large tree, towards the entrance of Boston, two effigies, one designed for the stamp master, the other for a jack boot, with a head and horns peeping out at the top. Great numbers both from town and country came to see them. A spirit of enthusiasm was diffused among the spectators. In the evening the whole was cut down and carried in procession by the populace shouting "liberty and property for ever; no stamps." They next pulled down a new building, lately erected by Mr. Oliver, the stamp master. They then went to his house, before which they beheaded his effigy, and at the same time broke his windows. Eleven days after similar violences were repeated. The mob attacked the house of Mr. William Storey, deputy register of the court of admiralty, —broke his windows—forced into his dwelling house, and destroyed the books and files belonging to the said court, and ruined a great part of his furniture. They next

next proceeded to the houſe of Benjamin Hallowel, Comptroller of the cuſtoms, and repeated ſimilar exceſſes, and drank and deſtroyed his liquors. They afterwards proceeded to the houſe of Mr. Hutchinſon, and ſoon demoliſhed it. They carried off his plate, furniture, and apparel, and ſcattered or deſtroyed manuſcripts and other curious and uſeful papers, which for thirty years he had been collecting. About half a dozen of the meaneſt of the mob were ſoon after taken up and committed, but they either broke jail, or otherwiſe eſcaped all puniſhment. The town of Boſton condemned the whole proceeding, and for ſome time, private gentlemen kept watch at night, to prevent further violence.

Similar diſturbances broke out in the adjacent Colonies, nearly about the ſame time. On the 27th Auguſt, 1765. the people of New-Port in Rhode Iſland, exhibited three effigies intended for Meſſieurs Howard, Moffatt, and Johnſon, in a cart with halters about their necks, and after hanging them on a gallows for ſome time, cut them down and burnt them, amidſt the acclamations of thouſands. On the day following, the people collected at the houſe of Mr. Martin Howard, a lawyer, who had written in defence of the right of Parliament to tax the Americans, and demoliſhed every thing that belonged to it. They proceeded to Dr. Moffatt's, who, in converſation, had ſupported the ſame right, and made a ſimilar devaſtation of his property.

In Connecticut they exhibitted effigies in ſundry places, and afterwards committed them to the flames.

In New-York, the ſtamp maſter having reſigned, the ſtamp papers were taken into Fort George, by Lieutenant Nov. 1, Governor Colden. The people, diſliking his political 1765. ſentiments, broke open his ſtable, took out his coach, and carried it in triumph through the principal ſtreets to the gallows. On one end of this they ſuſpended the effigy of the Lieut. Governor, having in his right hand a ſtamped bill of lading, and in the other a figure of the devil. After ſome time, they carried the apparatus to the gate of the fort, and from thence to the bowling green, under the muzzles of the guns, and burned the whole

whole amid the acclamations of many thousands. They went thence to Mayor James' house, stripped it of every article, and consumed the whole, because he was a friend to the stamp act.

The next evening the mob re-assembled, and insisted upon the Lieutenant Governor delivering the stamped papers into their hands, and threatened, in case of a refusal, to take them by force. After some negociation, it was agreed that they should be delivered to the corporation, and they were deposited in the city hall. Ten boxes of the same, which came by another conveyance, were burned.

The stamp act was not less odious to many of the inhabitants of the British West-India islands, than to those on the continent of North America. The people of St. Kitts obliged the stamp officer and his deputy to resign. Barbadoes, Canada, and Halifax, submitted to the act.

But when the ship which brought the stamp papers to Philadelphia, first appeared round Gloucester Point, all the vessels in the harbour hoisted their colours half mast high. The bells were rung muffled till evening, and every countenance added to the appearance of sincere mourning. A large number of people assembled, and endeavoured to procure the resignation of Mr. Hughes, the stamp distributor. He held out long, but at length found it necessary to comply.

As opportuninies offered, the assemblies generally passed resolutions, asserting their exclusive right to lay taxes on their constituents. The people, in their town meetings, instructed their representatives to oppose the stamp act. As a specimen of these, the instructions given to Thomas Forster, their representative, by the freeholders and other inhabitants of the town of Plymouth, are subjoined.

October, 1765.

In these the yeomanry of the country spoke the determined language of freedom. After expressing the highest esteem for the British constitution, and setting forth their grievances, they proceeded as follows:

"You, Sir, represent a people, who are not only descended from the first settlers of this country, but inhabit the very spot they first possessed. Here was first laid the

the foundation of the Britiſh empire, in this part of America, which, from a very ſmall beginning, has increaſed and ſpread in a manner very ſurpriſing, and almoſt incredible, eſpecially, when we conſider, that all this has been effected without the aid or aſſiſtance of any power on earth; that we have defended, protected, and ſecured ourſelves againſt the invaſions and cruelties of ſavages, and the ſubtlety and inhumanity of our inveterate and natural enemies, the French; and all this without the appropriation of any tax by ſtamps, or ſtamp acts, laid upon our fellow ſubjects, in any part of the King's dominions, for defraying the expence thereof. This place, Sir, was at firſt the aſylum of liberty, and we hope, will ever be preſerved ſacred to it, though it was then no more than a barren wilderneſs, inhabited only by ſavage men and beaſts. To this place our fathers, (whoſe memories be revered) poſſeſſed of the principles of liberty in their purity, diſdaining ſlavery, fled to enjoy thoſe privileges, which they had an undoubted right to, but were deprived of, by the hands of violence and oppreſſion, in their native country. We, Sir, their poſterity, the freeholders, and other inhabitants of this town, legally aſſembled for that purpoſe, poſſeſſed of the ſame ſentiments, and retaining the ſame ardour for liberty, think it in our diſpenſable duty, on this occaſion, to expreſs to you theſe our ſentiments of the ſtamp act, and its fatal conſequences to this country, and to enjoin upon you, as you regard not only the welfare, but the very being of this people, that you (conſiſtent with our allegiance to the King, and relation to the government of Great Britain) diſregarding all propoſals for that purpoſe, exert all your power and influence in oppoſition to the ſtamp act, at leaſt till we hear the ſucceſs of our petitions for relief. We likewiſe, to avoid diſgracing the memories of our anceſtors, as well as the reproaches of our own conſciences, and the curſes of poſterity, recommend it to you, to obtain, if poſſible, in the honourable houſe of repreſentatives of this province, a full and explicit aſſertion of our rights, and to have the ſame entered on their public records, that all generations yet to come may be convinced, that we have

not only a juſt ſenſe of our rights and liberties, but that we never, with ſubmiſſion to Divine Providence, will be ſlaves to any power on earth."

The expediency of calling a continental Congreſs to be compoſed of deputies from each of the provinces, had early occurred to the people of Maſſachuſetts. The
1765. aſſembly of that province paſſed a reſolution in favour of
June 6. that meaſure, and fixed on New-York as the place, and the ſecond Tueſday of October, as the time for holding the ſame. Soon after, they ſent circular letters to the ſpeakers of the ſeveral aſſemblies, requeſting their concurrence. This firſt advance towards continental union was ſeconded in South-Carolina, before it had been agreed to by any Colony to the ſouthward of New-England. The example of this province had a conſiderable influence in recommending the meaſure to others, who were divided in their opinions, on the propriety of it.

The aſſemblies of Virginia, North-Carolina, and Georgia, were prevented, by their governors, from ſending a deputation to this Congreſs. Twenty-eight deputies from Maſſachuſetts, Rhode-Iſland, Connecticut, New-York, New-Jerſey, Pennſylvania, Delaware, Maryland, and South Carolina, met at New-York; and after mature deliberation agreed on a declaration of their rights, and on a ſtatement of their grievances. They aſſerted in ſtrong terms, their exemption from all taxes, not impoſed by their own repreſentatives. They alſo concurred in a petition to the King, and memorial to the Houſe of Lords, and a petition to the Houſe of Commons. The Colonies that were prevented from ſending their repreſentatives to this Congreſs, forwarded petitions, ſimilar to thoſe which were adopted by the deputies which attended.

While a variety of legal and illegal methods were adopted to oppoſe the ſtamp act, the firſt of November, on which it was to commence its operation, approached. This in Boſton was uſhered in by a funeral tolling of bells. Many ſhops and ſtores were ſhut. The effigies of the planners and friends of the ſtamp act were carried

ried about the ſtreets in public deriſion, and then torn in pieces by the enraged populace. It was remarkable that though a large crowd was aſſembled, there was not the leaſt violence or diſorder.

At Portſmouth in New-Hampſhire, the morning was uſhered in with tolling all the bells in town. In the courſe of the day, notice was given to the friends of liberty to attend her funeral. A coffin neatly ornamented, inſcribed with the word *Liberty* in large letters, was carried to the grave. The funeral proceſſion began from the ſtate houſe, attended with two unbraced drums. While the inhabitants who followed the coffin were in motion, minute guns were fired, and continued till the corpſe arrived at the place of interment. Then an oration in favour of the deceaſed was pronounced. It was ſcarcely ended before the corpſe was taken up, it having been perceived that ſome remains of life were left, at which the inſcription was immediately altered to "Liberty revived." The bells immediately exchanged their melancholy for a more joyful ſound, and ſatisfaction appeared in every countenance. The whole was conducted with decency, and without injury or inſult to any man's perſon or property. Nov. 1.

In Maryland, the effigy of the ſtamp maſter, on one ſide of which was written, "Tyranny," on the other, "Oppreſſion," and acroſs the breaſt, "Damn my country, I'll get money," was carried through the ſtreets from the place of confinement to the whipping poſt, and from thence to the pillory. After ſuffering many indignities, it was firſt hanged and then burnt.

The general averſion to the ſtamp act was, by ſimilar methods, in a variety of places demonſtrated. It is remarkable, that the proceedings of the populace on theſe occaſions, were carried on with decorum and regularity. They were not ebullitions of a thoughtleſs mob, but for the moſt part planned by leading men of character and influence, who were friends to peace and order. Theſe, knowing well that the bulk of mankind are more led by their ſenſes than by their reaſon, conducted the public exhibi-

exhibitions on that principle, with a view of making the ſtamp act and its friends both ridiculous and odious.

1765. Though the ſtamp act was to have operated from the firſt of November, yet legal proceedings in the courts were carried on as before. Veſſels entered and departed without ſtamped papers. The printers boldly printed and circulated their newſpapers, and found a ſufficient number of readers, though they uſed common paper, in defiance of the act of Parliament. In moſt departments, by common conſent, buſineſs was carried on as though no ſtamp act had exiſted. This was accompanied by ſpirited reſolutions to riſque all conſequences, rather than ſubmit to uſe the paper required by law. While theſe matters were in agitation, the Coloniſts entered into aſſociations againſt importing Britiſh manufactures, till the ſtamp act ſhould be repealed. In this manner Britiſh liberty was made to operate againſt Britiſh tyranny. Agreeably to the free conſtitution of Great Britain, the ſubject was at liberty to buy, or not to buy, as he pleaſed. By ſuſpending their future purchaſes till the repeal of the ſtamp act, the Coloniſts made it the intereſt of merchants and manufacturers to ſolicit for that repeal. They had uſually taken off ſo great a proportion of Britiſh manufactures, that the ſudden ſtoppage of all their orders, amounting annually to ſeveral millions ſterling, threw ſome thouſands in the Mother Country out of employment, and induced them, from a regard to their own intereſt, to advocate the meaſures wiſhed for by America. The petitions from the Colonies were ſeconded by petitions from the merchants and manufactures of Great Britain. What the former prayed for as a matter of right, and connected with their liberties, the latter alſo ſolicited from motives of immediate advantage. In order to remedy the deficiency of Britiſh goods, the Coloniſts betook themſelves to a variety of neceſſary domeſtic manufactures. In a little time, large quantities of coarſe and common cloaths were brought to market, and theſe, though dearer, and of a worſe quality, were cheerfully preferred to ſimilar articles imported from Britain. That wool might not be wanting, they entered into reſolutions

to

to abstain from eating lambs. Foreign elegancies were generally laid aside. The women were as exemplary as the men in various instances of self-denial. With great readiness, they refused every article of decoration for their persons, and of luxury for their tables. These restrictions, which the Colonists had voluntarily imposed on themselves, were so well observed, that multitudes of artificers in England were reduced to great distress, and some of their most flourishing manufactories were, in a great measure, at a stand. An association was entered into by many of the sons of liberty, the name given to those who were opposed to the stamp act, by which they agreed "to march with the utmost expedition, at their own proper costs and expence, with their whole force to the relief of those that should be in danger from the stamp act, or its promoters and abettors, or any thing relative to it, on account of any thing that may have been done in opposition to its obtaining." This was subscribed by so many in New-York and New-England, that nothing but a repeal could have prevented the immediate commencement of a civil war.

From the decided opposition to the stamp act, which had been adopted by the Colonies, it became necessary for Great Britain to enforce or repeal it. Both methods of proceeding had supporters. The opposers of a repeal urged arguments, drawn from the dignity of the nation, the danger of giving way to the clamours of the Americans, and the consequences of weakening parliamentary authority over the Colonies. On the other hand, it was evident, from the determined opposition of the Colonies, that it could not be enforced without a civil war, by which, in every event, the nation must be a loser. In the course of these discussions, Dr. Franklin was examined at the bar of the House of Commons, and gave extensive information on the state of American affairs, and the impolicy of the stamp act, which contributed much to remove prejudices, and to produce a disposition that was friendly to a repeal.

Some speakers of great weight, in both Houses of Parliament, denied their right of taxing the Colonies. The most

most diſtinguiſhed ſupporters of this opinion were Lord Camden in the Houſe of Peers, and Mr. Pitt in the Houſe of Commons. The former, in ſtrong language, ſaid, "My poſition is this, I repeat it, I will maintain it to my laſt hour. Taxation and repreſentation are inſeparable. This poſition is founded on the laws of nature. It is more, it is itſelf an eternal law of nature. For whatever is a man's own, is abſolutely his own. No man has a right to take it from him without his conſent. Whoever attempts to do it, attempts an injury; whoever does it, commits a robbery." Mr. Pitt, with an original boldneſs of expreſſion, juſtified the Coloniſts in oppoſing the ſtamp act. "You have no right," ſaid he, "to tax America. I rejoice that America has reſiſted. Three millions of our fellow ſubjects ſo loſt to every ſenſe of virtue, as tamely to give up their liberties, would be fit inſtruments to make ſlaves of the reſt." He concluded with giving his advice, that the ſtamp act be repealed abſolutely, totally, and immediately,—that the reaſon for the repeal be aſſigned, that it was founded on an erroneous principle. "At the ſame time," ſaid he, "let the ſovereign authority of this country over the Colonies, be aſſerted in as ſtrong terms as can be deviſed, and be made to extend to every point of legiſlation whatſoever; that we may bind their trade, confine their manufactures, and exerciſe every power, except that of taking their money out of their pockets without their conſent." The approbation of this illuſtrious ſtateſman, whoſe diſtinguiſhed abilities had raiſed Great Britain to the higheſt pitch of renown, inſpired the Americans with additional confidence, in the rectitude of their claims of exemption from parliamentary taxation, and emboldened them to farther oppoſition, when at a future day, as ſhall be hereafter related, the project of an American revenue was reſumed. After much debating, and two proteſts in the Houſe of Lords, and paſſing an act "for ſecuring the dependence of America on Great Britain," the repeal of
March the ſtamp act was finally carried. This event gave
18. great joy in London. Ships in the river Thames diſplayed their colours, and houſes were illuminated all

over

over the city. It was no ſooner known in America, than the Coloniſts reſcinded their reſolutions, and recommenced their mercantile intercourſe with the Mother Country. They preſented their homeſpun cloaths to the poor, and imported more largely than ever. The churches reſounded with thankſgivings, and their public and private rejoicings knew no bounds. By letters, addreſſes, and other means, almoſt all the Colonies ſhewed unequivocal marks of acknowledgement, and gratitude. So ſudden a calm recovered after ſo violent a ſtorm, is without a parallel in hiſtory. By the judicious ſacrifice of one law, the Parliament of Great Britain procured an acquieſcence in all that remained.

There were enlightened patriots, fully impreſſed with an idea, that the immoderate joy of the Coloniſts was diſproportioned to the advantage they had gained.

The ſtamp act, though repealed, was not repealed on American principles. The preamble aſſigned as the reaſon thereof, "That the collecting the ſeveral duties and revenues, as by the ſaid act was directed, would be attended with many inconveniencies, and productive of conſequences dangerous to the commercial intereſts of theſe kingdoms." Though this reaſon was a good one in England, it was by no means ſatisfactory in America. At the ſame time that the ſtamp act was repealed, the abſolute, unlimited ſupremacy of Parliament was, in words, aſſerted. The oppoſers of the repeal contended for this as eſſential, the friends of that meaſure acquieſced in it to ſtrengthen their party, and make ſure of their object. Many of both ſides thought, that the dignity of Great Britain required ſomething of the kind to counterbalance the loſs of authority, that might reſult from her yielding to the clamours of the Coloniſts. The act for this purpoſe was called the declaratory act, and was in principle more hoſtile to American rights, than the ſtamp act; for it annulled thoſe reſolutions and acts of the Provincial Aſſemblies, in which they had aſſerted their right to exemption from all taxes, not impoſed by their own repreſentatives; and alſo enacted, "That the Parliament

liament had, and of right ought to have, power to bind the Colonies, in all cafes whatfoever."

The bulk of the Americans, intoxicated with the advantage they had gained, overlooked this ftatute, which, in one comprehenfive fentence, not only deprived them of liberty and property, but of every right incident to humanity. They confidered it as a falvo for the honour of Parliament, in repealing an act, which had fo lately received their fanction, and flattered themfelves it would remain a dead letter, and that although the right of taxation was in words retained, it would never be exercifed. Unwilling to contend about paper claims of ideal fupremacy, they returned to their habits of good humour with the Parent State.

The repeal of the ftamp act, in a relative connection with all its circumftances and confequences, was the firft direct ftep to American independency. The claims of the two countries were not only left undecided, but a foundation was laid for their extending at a future period, to the impoffibility of a compromife. Though for the prefent Great Britain receded from enforcing her claim of American revenue, a numerous party, adhering to that fyftem, referved themfelves for more favourable circumftances to enforce it; and at the fame time the Colonifts, more enlightened on the fubject, and more fully convinced of the rectitude of their claims, were encouraged to oppofe it, under whatfoever form it fhould appear, or under whatfoever difguife it fhould cover itfelf.

Elevated with the advantage they had gained, from that day forward, inftead of feeling themfelves dependent on Great Britain, they conceived that, in refpect to commerce, fhe was dependent on them. It infpired them with fuch high ideas of the importance of their trade, that they confidered the Mother Country to be brought under greater obligations to them, for purchafing her manufactures, than they were to her for protection and the adminiftration of civil government. The freemen of Britifh America, impreffed with the exalting fentiments of patriotifm and of liberty, conceived it to be within their power, by future combinations, at any time to convulfe

convulſe, if not to bankrupt, the nation from which they ſprung.

Opinions of this kind were ſtrengthened by their local ſituation, favouring ideas, as extenſive as the unexplored continent of which they were inhabitants. While the pride of Britons revolted at the thought of their Colonies refuſing ſubjection to that Parliament which they obeyed, the Americans with equal haughtineſs exclaimed, "ſhall the petty iſland of Great Britain, ſcarce a ſpeck on the map of the world, controul the free citizens of the great continent of America?"

Theſe high ſounding pretenſions would have been harmleſs, or at moſt, ſpent themſelves in words, had not a ruinous policy, untaught by recent experience, called them into ſerious action. Though the ſtamp act was repealed, an American revenue was ſtill a favourite object with many in Great Britain. The equity and the advantage of taxing the Coloniſts by parliamentary authority were very apparent to their underſtandings, but the mode of effecting it, without hazarding the public tranquillity, was not ſo obvious. Mr. Charles Townſend, afterwards Chancellor of the Exchequer, pawned his credit to accompliſh what many ſo earneſtly deſired. He accordingly brought into Parliament a bill for granting duties in the 1767.
Britiſh Colonies on glaſs, paper, painters colours, and tea, which was afterwards enacted into a law. If the ſmall duties impoſed on theſe articles, had preceded the ſtamp act, they might have paſſed unobſerved: but the late diſcuſſions occaſioned by that act, had produced among the Coloniſts, not only an animated conviction of their exemption from parliamentary taxation, but a jealouſy of the deſigns of Great Britain. The ſentiments of the Americans on this ſubject bore a great reſemblance to thoſe of their Britiſh countrymen of the preceding century, in the caſe of ſhip money. The amount of that tax was very moderate, little exceeding twenty thouſand pounds. It was diſtributed upon the people with equality, and expended for the honour and advantage of the kingdom, yet all theſe circumſtances could not reconcile the people of England to the impoſition.

It

It was entirely arbitrary. "By the ſame right," ſaid they, "any other tax may be impoſed." In like manner the Americans conſidered theſe ſmall duties in the nature of an entering wedge, deſigned to make way for others, which would be greater and heavier. In a relative connection with late acts of Parliament, reſpecting domeſtic manufactures and foreign commerce, laws for impoſing taxes on Britiſh commodities exported to the Colonies, formed a complete circle of oppreſſion, from which there was no poſſibility of eſcaping. The Coloniſts had been, previouſly, reſtrained from manufacturing certain articles for their own conſumption. Other acts confined them to the excluſive uſe of Britiſh merchandize. The addition of duties put them wholly in the power and diſcretion of Great Britain; "We are not," ſaid they, "permitted to import from any nation, other than our own Parent State, and have been in ſome caſes by her reſtrained from manufacturing for ourſelves, and ſhe claims a right to do ſo in every inſtance which is incompatible with her intereſt. To theſe reſtrictions we have hitherto ſubmitted, but ſhe now riſes in her demands, and impoſes duties on thoſe commodities, the purchaſing of which, elſewhere than at her market, her law forbids, and the manufacturing of which for our own uſe, ſhe may any moment ſhe pleaſes reſtrain. If her right is valid to lay a ſmall tax, it is equally ſo to lay a large one, for from the nature of the caſe, ſhe muſt be guided excluſively by her own opinions of our ability, and of the propriety of the duties ſhe may impoſe. Nothing is left for us but to complain and pay." They contended that there was no real difference between the principle of theſe new duties and the ſtamp act, they were both deſigned to raiſe a revenue in America, and in the ſame manner. The payment of the duties impoſed by the ſtamp act, might have been eluded by the total diſuſe of ſtamped paper, and ſo might the payment of theſe duties, by the total diſuſe of thoſe articles on which they were laid, but in neither caſe, without great difficulty. The Coloniſts were therefore reduced to the hard alternative of being obliged totally to diſuſe articles of the greateſt neceſſity in human life,

life, or to pay a tax without their consent. The fire of opposition, which had been smothered by the repeal of the stamp act, burned afresh against the same principle of taxation, exhibited in its new form. Mr. Dickenson, of Pennsylvania, on this occasion presented to the public a series of letters signed the Farmer, proving the extreme danger which threatened the liberties of America, from their acquiescence in a precedent which might establish the claim of parliamentary taxation. They were written with great animation, and were read with uncommon avidity. Their reasoning was so convincing, that many of the candid and disinterested citizens of Great Britain acknowledged that the American opposition to parliamentary taxation was justifiable. The enormous sums which the stamp act would have collected, had thoroughly alarmed the Colonists for their property. It was now demonstrated by several writers, especially by the Pennsylvania Farmer, that a small tax, though more specious, was equally dangerous, as it established a precedent which eventually annihilated American property. The declaratory act, which at first was the subject of but a few comments, was now dilated upon as a foundation for every species of oppression: and the small duties lately imposed were considered as the beginning of a train of much greater evils.

Had the Colonists admitted the propriety of raising a parliamentary revenue among them, the erection of an American board of commissioners for managing it, which was about this time instituted at Boston, would have been a convenience rather than an injury; but united as they were in sentiments, of the contrariety of that measure to their natural and constitutional rights, they ill brooked the innovation. As it was coeval with the new duties, they considered it as a certain evidence that the project of an extensive American revenue, notwithstanding the repeal of the stamp act, was still in contemplation. A dislike to British taxation naturally produced a dislike to a board which was to be instrumental in that business, and occasioned many insults to its commissioners.

The

The revenue act of 1767 produced resolves, petitions, addresses, and remonstrances, similar to those with which the Colonists opposed the stamp act. It also gave rise to a second association for suspending farther importations of British manufactures, till these offensive duties should be taken off. Uniformity, in these measures, was promoted by a circular letter from the Assembly of Massachusetts to the speakers of other assemblies. This
1768. stated the petitions and representations, which they had forwarded against the late duties, and strongly pointed out the great difficulties, that must arise to themselves and their constituents, from the operation of acts of Parliament imposing duties on the unrepresented American Colonies, and requested a reciprocal free communication on public affairs. Most of the Provincial Assemblies, as they had opportunities of deliberating on the subject, approved of the proceedings of the Massachusetts Assembly, and harmonized with them in the measures which they had adopted. In resolves, they stated their rights, in firm but decent language; and in petitions, they prayed for a repeal of the late acts, which they considered as infringements on their liberties.

It is not unreasonable to suppose, that the Minister who planned these duties, hoped that they would be regarded as regulations of trade. He might also presume, that as they amounted only to an inconsiderable sum, they would not give any alarm. The circular letter of the Massachusetts Assembly, which laid the foundation for united petitions against them, gave, therefore, great offence. Lord Hillsborough, who had lately been appointed Secretary of State for the American department, wrote letters to the governors of the respective provinces, urging them to exert their influence, to prevent the assemblies from taking any notice of it, and he called on the Massachusetts Assembly to rescind their proceedings on that subject. This measure was both injudicious and irritating. To require a public body to rescind a resolution, for sending a letter, which was already sent, answered, and acted upon, was a bad specimen of the wisdom of the new minister. To call a vote, for sending a circular

lar letter to invite the aſſemblies of the neighbouring colonies to communicate together in the purſuit of legal meaſures to obtain a redreſs of grievances, "a flagitious attempt to diſturb the public peace," appeared to the Coloniſts a very injudicious application of harſh epithets to their conſtitutional right of petitioning. To threaten a new houſe of aſſembly with diſſolution, in caſe of their not agreeing to reſcind an act of a former aſſembly, which was not executory, but executed, claſhed no leſs with the dictates of common ſenſe, than the conſtitutional rights of Britiſh Coloniſts. The propoſition for reſcinding was negatived, by a majority of 92 to 17. The aſſembly was immediately diſſolved, as had been threatened. This procedure of the new Secretary was conſidered by the Coloniſts as an attempt to ſuppreſs all communication of ſentiment between them, and to prevent their united ſupplications from reaching the royal ear. It anſwered no one valuable purpoſe, but naturally tended to miſchief.

The bad humour, which from ſucceſſive irritation already too much prevailed, was about this time wrought up to a high pitch of reſentment and violence, on occaſion of the ſeizure of Mr. Hancock's ſloop Liberty, for 1768.
not having entered all the wines ſhe had brought from June 10.
Madeira. The popularity of her owner, the name of the ſloop, and the general averſion to the board of commiſſioners and parliamentary taxation, concurred to inflame the minds of the people. They reſented the removal of the ſloop from the wharf, as implying an apprehenſion of a reſcue. They uſed every means in their power to interrupt the officers in the execution of their buſineſs; and numbers ſwore that they would be revenged. Mr. Harriſon the collector, Mr. Hallowell the comptroller, and Mr. Irwine the inſpector of imports and exports, were ſo roughly handled, as to bring their lives in danger. The windows of ſome of their houſes were broken, and the boat of the collector was dragged through the town and burned on the common. Such was the temper and diſpoſition of many of the inhabitants, that the commiſſioners of the cuſtoms thought proper

proper to retire on board the Romney man of war, and afterwards to Castle William. The commissioners, from the first moment of their institution, had been an eye sore to their people of Boston. This, though partly owing to their active zeal in detecting smugglers, principally arose from the association which existed in the minds of the inhabitants, between that board and an American revenue. The declaratory act of 1766, the revenue act of 1767; together with the pomp and expence of this board, so disproportionate to the small income of the present duties, conspired to convince not only the few who were benefited by smuggling, but the great body of enlightened freemen, that farther and greater impositions of parliamentary taxes were intended. In proportion, as this opinion gained ground, the inhabitants became more disrespectful to the executive officers of the revenue, and more disposed, in the frenzy of patriotism, to commit outrages on their persons and property. The constant bickering that existed between them and the inhabitants, together with the steady opposition given by the latter to the discharge of the official duties of the former, induced the commissioners and friends of the American revenue, to solicit the protection of a regular force, to be stationed at Boston. In compliance with their wishes, his Majesty ordered two regiments and some armed vessels to repair thither, for supporting and assisting the officers of the customs in the execution of their duty. This restrained the active exertion of that turbulent spirit, which since the passing of the late revenue laws had revived, but it added to the preexisting causes thereof.

When it was reported in Boston, that one or more regiments were ordered there, a meeting of the inhabitants was called, and a committee appointed to request the Governor to issue precepts for convening a general assembly. He replied, "that he could not comply with their request, till he had received his Majesty's commands for that purpose." The answer being reported, Sept. 13. some spirited resolutions were adopted. In particular it was voted, that the select men of Boston should write

to the select men of other towns, to propose, that a convention be held, of deputies from each, to meet at Faneuil-hall, in Boston, on the 22d instant. It was afterwards voted, "That as there is apprehension in the minds of many, of an approaching war with France, those inhabitants, who are not provided, be requested to furnish themselves forthwith with arms." Sept. 22.

Ninety-six towns, and eight districts, agreed to the proposal made by the inhabitants of Boston, and appointed deputies to attend a convention, but the town of Hatfield refused its concurrence. When the deputies met, they conducted themselves with moderation, disclaimed all legislative authority, advised the people to pay the greatest deference to government, and to wait patiently for a redress of their grievances from his Majesty's wisdom and moderation. After stating to the world the causes of their meeting, and an account of their proceedings, they dissolved themselves, after a short session, and went home.

Within a day after the convention broke up, the expected regiments arrived, and were peaceably received. Hints had been thrown out by some idle people, that they should not be permitted to come on shore. Preparations were made by the captains of the men of war in the harbour, to fire on the town, in case opposition had been made to their landing, but the crisis for an appeal to arms was not yet arrived. It was hoped by some, that the folly and rage of the Bostonians would have led them to this rash measure, and thereby have afforded an opportunity for giving them some naval and military correction, but both prudence and policy induced them to adopt a more temperate line of conduct.

While the contention was kept alive by the successive irritations, which have been mentioned, there was, particularly in Massachusetts, a species of warfare carried on between the royal governors, and the provincial assemblies. Each watched the other with all the jealousy, which strong distrust could inspire. The latter regarded the former as instruments of power, wishing to pay their court

court to the Mother Country, by curbing the ſpirit of American freedom, and the former kept a ſtrict eye on the latter, leſt they might ſmooth the way to independence, at which they were charged with aiming. Lieut. Governor Hutchinſon, of Maſſachuſſetts, virtually challenged the Aſſembly to a diſpute, on the ground of the controverſy between the two countries. This was accepted by the latter, and the ſubject diſcuſſed with all the ſubtilty of argument, which the ingenuity of either party could ſuggeſt.

The war of words was not confined to the Colonies. While the American aſſemblies paſſed reſolutions, aſſerting their excluſive right to tax their conſtituents, the Parliament by reſolves aſſerted their unlimited ſupremacy in and over the Colonies. While the former, in their public acts, diſclaimed all views of independence, they were ſucceſſively repreſented in parliamentary reſolves, royal ſpeeches, and addreſſes from Lords and Commons, as being in a ſtate of diſobedience to law and government, and as having proceeded to meaſures ſubverſive of the conſtitution, and manifeſting a diſpoſition to throw off all ſubordination to Great Britain.

1769. In February 1769, both Houſes of Parliament went one ſtep beyond all that had preceded. They then concurred in a joint addreſs to his Majeſty, in which they expreſſed their ſatisfaction in the meaſures his Majeſty had purſued—gave the ſtrongeſt aſſurances, that they would effectually ſupport him in ſuch farther meaſures as might be found neceſſary, to maintain the civil magiſtrates in a due execution of the laws, in Maſſachuſett's Bay, and beſeeched him "to direct the Governor to take the moſt effectual methods for procuring the fulleſt information, touching all treaſons or miſpriſions of treaſons committed within the government, ſince the 30th day of December, 1767; and to tranſmit the ſame, together with the names of the perſons who were moſt active in the commiſſion of ſuch offences, to one of the Secretaries of State, in order that his Majeſty might iſſue a ſpecial commiſſion for inquiring of, hearing, and determining,

mining, the said offences, within the realm of Great Britain, pursuant to the provisions of the statute of the 35th of King Henry the 8th." The latter part of this address, which proposed the bringing of delinquents from Massachusetts, to be tried at a tribunal in Great Britain, for crimes committed in America, underwent many severe animadversions.

It was asserted to be totally inconsistent with the spirit of the constitution, for in England a man charged with a crime, had a right to be tried in the country in which his offence was supposed to have been committed. "Justice is regularly and impartially administered in our courts," said the Colonists, "and yet by direction of Parliament, offenders are to be taken by force, together with all such persons as may be pointed out as witnesses, and carried to England, there to be tried in a distant land, by a jury of strangers, and subject to all the disadvantages which result from want of friends, want of witnesses, and want of money."

The House of Burgesses of Virginia met soon after official accounts of the joint addresses of Lords and Commons on this subject reached America; and in a few days after their meeting, passed resolutions expressing "their exclusive right to tax their constituents, and their right to petition their Sovereign for redress of grievances, and the lawfulness of procuring the concurrence of the other Colonies in praying for the royal interposition in favour of the violated rights of America; and that all trials for treason, or for any crime whatsoever, committed in that Colony, ought to be before his Majesty's courts within the said Colony; and that the seizing any person residing in the said Colony, suspected of any crime whatsoever committed therein, and sending such person of places beyond the sea to be tried, was highly derogatory of the rights of British subjects." The next day Lord Botetourt, the governor of Virginia, sent for the House of Burgesses and addressed them as follows: "Mr. Speaker and gentlemen of the House of Burgesses, I have heard of your resolves, and augur ill of their effects. You have made

made it my duty to diſſolve you, and you are diſſolved accordingly."

The Aſſembly of North-Carolina adopted reſolutions, ſimilar to thoſe of Virginia, for which Tyron their governor diſſolved them. The members of the Houſe of Burgeſſes in Virginia, and of the Aſſembly of North-Carolina, after their diſſolution, met as private gentlemen, choſe their late ſpeakers moderators, and adopted reſolutions againſt importing Britiſh goods. The non-importation agreement was in this manner forwarded by the very meaſures which were intended to curb the ſpirit of American freedom, from which it ſprung. Meetings of the aſſociators were regularly held in the various provinces. Committees were appointed to examine all veſſels arriving from Britain. Cenſures were freely paſſed on ſuch as refuſed to concur in theſe aſſociations, and their names publiſhed in the newſpapers as enemies to their country. The regular acts of the Provincial Aſſemblies were not ſo much reſpected and obeyed as the decrees of theſe committees, the aſſociations were in general, as well obſerved as could be expected, notwithſtanding there were ſome colluſions. The fear of mobs, of public reſentment and contempt, co-operating with patriotiſm, preponderated over private intereſt and convenience. One of the importing merchants of Boſton, who heſitated in his compliance with the determination of the inhabitants, was waited upon by a committee of tradeſmen, with an axeman and carpenter at their head, who informed him, "that 1000 men were waiting for his anſwer, and that if he refuſed to comply, they could not tell what might be the conſequence." He complied, and the newſpapers ſoon after publiſhed, that he did it voluntarily.

In Boſton, Lieut. Governor Hutchinſon endeavoured to promote a counter aſſociation, but without effect. The friends of importation objected, that till Parliament made proviſion for the puniſhment of the confederacies againſt importation, a counter aſſociation would anſwer no other purpoſe, than to expoſe the aſſociators to popular rage.

The

The Boftonians, about this time, went one ftep farther. They re-fhipped goods to Great Britain, inftead of ftoring them as formerly. This was refolved upon in a town meeting, on the information of an inhabitant, who communicated a letter he had lately received from a Member of Parliament, in which it was faid, "that fhipping back ten thoufand pounds worth of goods would do more than ftoring a hundred thoufand." This turned the fcale, and procured a majority of votes for re-fhipping. Not only in this, but in many other inftances, the violences of the Colonifts were foftered by individuals in Great Britain. A number of thefe were in principle with the Americans, in denying the right of Parliament to tax them, but others were more influenced by a fpirit of oppofition on the minifterial majority, than by a regard to the conftitutional liberties of either country.

The non-importation agreement had now lafted fome time, and by degrees had become general. Several of the colonial affemblies had been diffolved, or prorogued, for afferting the rights of their conftituents. The royal governors, and other friends to an American revenue, were chagrined. The Colonifts were irritated. Good men, both in England and America, deplored thefe untoward events, and beheld with concern an increafing ill humour between thofe, who were bound by intereft and affection to be friends to each other.

In confequence of the American non-importation agreement, founded in oppofition to the duties in 1767, the manufacturers of Great Britain experienced a renewal of the diftreffes, which followed the adoption of fimilar refolution, in the year 1765, the repeal of thefe duties was therefore folicited by the fame influence, which had procured the repeal of the ftamp act. The rulers of Great Britain acted without decifion. Inftead of perfevering in their own fyftem of coercion, or indeed in any one uniform fyftem of colonial government, they ftruck out a middle line, embarraffed with the confequences, both of feverity and of lenity, and which was without

without the complete benefits of either. Soon after the ſpirited addreſs to his Majeſty, laſt mentioned, had paſ-
1769. ſed both Houſes of Parliament, aſſurances were given for repealing all the duties impoſed in 1767, excepting that of three-pence per pound on tea.

Anxious on the one hand to eſtabliſh parliamentary ſupremacy, and on the other, afraid to ſtem the torrent of oppoſition, they conceded enough to weaken the former, and yet not enough to ſatisfy the latter. Had Great Britain generouſly repealed the whole, and for ever relinquiſhed all claim to the right, or even the exerciſe of the right of taxation, the union of the two countries might have laſted for ages. Had ſhe ſeriouſly determined to compel the ſubmiſſion of the Colonies, nothing could have been more unfriendly to this deſign, than her repeated conceſſions to their reiterated aſſociations. The declaratory act, and the reſervation of the duty on tea, left the cauſe of contention between the two countries in full force; but the former was only a claim on paper, and the latter might be evaded, by refuſing to purchaſe any tea on which the parliamentary tax was impoſed. The Coloniſts, therefore, conceiving that their commerce might be renewed, without eſtabliſhing any precedent injurious to their liberties, relaxed in their aſſociations, in every particular, except tea, and immediately recommenced the importation of all other articles of merchandiſe. A political calm once more took place. The Parent State might now have cloſed the diſpute for ever, and honourably receded, without a formal relinquiſhment of her claims. Neither the reſervation of the duty on tea, by the Britiſh Parliament, nor the exceptions made by the Coloniſts, of importing no tea, on which a duty was impoſed, would, if they had been left to their own operation, have diſturbed the returning harmony of the two countries. Without freſh irritation, their wounds might have healed, and not a ſcar been left behind.

Theſe two abortive attempts to raiſe a parliamentary revenue in America, cauſed a fermentation in the minds

of

of the Coloniſts, and gave birth to many inquiries reſpecting their natural rights. Reflections and reaſonings on this ſubject produced a high ſenſe of liberty, and a general conviction that there could be no ſecurity for their property, if they were to be taxed at the diſcretion of a Britiſh Parliament, in which they were unrepreſented, and over which they had no controul. A determination not only to oppoſe this new claim of taxation, but to keep a ſtrict watch, leſt it might be eſtabliſhed in ſome diſguiſed form, took poſſeſſion of their minds.

It commonly happens in the diſcuſſion of doubtful claims between ſtates, that the ground of the original diſpute inſenſibly changes. When the mind is employed in inveſtigating one ſubject, others aſſociated with it, naturally preſent themſelves. In the courſe of inquiries on the ſubject of parliamentary taxation, the reſtriction on the trade of the Coloniſts—the neceſſity that was impoſed on them to purchaſe Britiſh and other manufactures, loaded with their full proportion of all taxes paid by thoſe who made or ſold them, became more generally known. While American writers were vindicating their country from the charge of contributing nothing to the common expences of the empire, they were led to ſet off to their credit, the diſadvantage of their being confined excluſively to purchaſe ſuch manufactures in Britain. They inſtituted calculations, by which they demonſtrated that the monopoly of their trade, drew from them greater ſums for the ſupport of government, than were uſually paid by an equal number of their fellow citizens of Great Britain; and that taxation, ſuperadded to ſuch a monopoly, would leave them in a ſtate of perfect uncompenſated ſlavery. The inveſtigation of theſe ſubjects brought matters into view which the friends of union ought to have kept out of ſight. Theſe circumſtances, together with the extenſive population of the Eaſtern States, and their adventurous ſpirit of commerce, ſuggeſted to ſome bold ſpirits, that not only Britiſh taxation, but Britiſh navigation laws, were unfriendly to the intereſts of America. Speculations of this magnitude ſuited well with

with the extenſive views of ſome capital merchants, but never would have rouſed the bulk of the people, had not new matter brought the diſpute between the two countries to a point, in which every individual was intereſted.

On reviewing the conduct of the Britiſh miniſtry reſpecting the Colonies, much weakneſs as well as folly appears. For a ſucceſſion of years there was a ſteady purſuit of American revenue, but great inconſiſtence in the projects for obtaining it. In one moment the Parliament was for enforcing their laws, the next for repealing them. Doing and undoing, menacing and ſubmitting, ſtraining and relaxing, followed each other, in alternate ſucceſſion. The object of adminiſtration, though twice relinquiſhed as to any preſent efficiency, was invariably purſued, but without any unity of ſyſtem.

On the 9th of May 1769, the King in his ſpeech to Parliament highly applauded their hearty concurrence, in maintaining the execution of the laws in every part of his dominions. Five days after this ſpeech, Lord Hillſborough, Secretary of State for the Colonies, wrote to Lord Botetourt, governor of Virginia: "I can take upon me to aſſure you, notwithſtanding informations to the contrary, from men with factious and ſeditious views, that his Majeſty's preſent adminiſtration have at no time entertained a deſign to propoſe to Parliament to lay any farther taxes upon America, for the purpoſe of raiſing a revenue, and that it is at preſent their intention to propoſe the next ſeſſion of Parliament, to take off the duties upon glaſs, paper, and colours, upon conſideration of ſuch duties having been laid contrary to the true principles of commerce." The Governor was alſo informed, that "his Majeſty relied upon his prudence and fidelity, to make ſuch an explanation of his Majeſty's meaſures, as would tend to remove prejudices, and to re-eſtabliſh mutual confidence and affection between the Mother Country and the Colonies." In the exact ſpirit of his inſtructions, Lord Botetourt addreſſed the Virginia Aſſembly as follows: "It may poſſibly be objected, that as his Majeſty's

Majesty's present administration are not immortal, their successors may be inclined to attempt to undo what the present ministers shall have attempted to perform, and to that objection I can give but this answer, that it is my firm opinion, that the plan I have stated to you will certainly take place, and that it will never be departed from; and so determined am I for ever to abide by it, that I will be content to be declared infamous, if I do not to the last hour of my life, at all times, in all places, and upon all occasions, exert every power, with which I either am, or ever shall be, legally invested, in order to obtain and maintain for the continent of America, that satisfaction which I have been authorised to promise this day, by the confidential servants of our gracious Sovereign, who, to my certain knowledge, rates his honour so high, that he would rather part with his crown, than preserve it by deceit."

These assurances were received with transports of joy by the Virginians. They viewed them as pledging his Majesty for security, that the late design for raising a revenue in America was abandoned, and never more to be resumed. The Assembly of Virginia, in answer to Lord Botetourt, expressed themselves thus: "We are sure our most gracious Sovereign, under whatever changes may happen in his confidential servants, will remain immutable in the ways of truth and justice, and that he is incapable of deceiving his faithful subjects; and we esteem your Lordship's information not only as warranted, but even sanctified by the royal word."

How far these solemn engagements with the Americans were observed, subsequent events will demonstrate. In a perfect reliance on them, most of the Colonists returned to their ancient habits of good humour, and flattered themselves that no future Parliament would undertake to give or grant away their property.

From the royal and ministerial assurances given in favour of America in the year 1769, and the subsequent repeal in 1770, of five sixths of the duties which had been imposed in 1767, together with the consequent renewal of the mercantile intercourse between Great Britain

Britain and the Colonies, many hoped that the contention between the two countries was finally closed. In all the provinces, excepting Massachusetts, appearances seemed to favour that opinion. Many incidents operated there to the prejudice of that harmony, which had begun elsewhere to return. The stationing a military force among them was a fruitful source of uneasiness. The royal army had been brought thither, with the avowed design of enforcing submission to the Mother Country. Speeches from the throne, and addresses from both Houses of Parliament, had taught them to look upon the inhabitants as a factious, turbulent people, who aimed at throwing off all subordination to Great Britain. They, on
1770. the other hand, were accustomed to look upon the soldiery as instruments of tyranny, sent on purpose to dragoon them out of their liberties.

Reciprocal insults soured the tempers, and mutual injuries embittered the passions, of the opposite parties: besides, some fiery spirits who thought it an indignity to have troops quartered among them, were constantly exciting the towns-people to quarrel with the soldiers.

On the second of March, a fray took place near Mr. Gray's ropewalk, between a private soldier of the 29th regiment and an inhabitant. The former was supported by his comrades, the latter by the rope-makers, till several on both sides were involved in the consequences. On the 5th a more dreadful scene was presented. The soldiers, when under arms, were pressed upon, insulted, and pelted, by a mob armed with clubs, sticks, and snowballs covering stones: they were also dared to fire. In this situation, one of the soldiers who had received a blow, in resentment fired at the supposed aggressor, This was followed by a single discharge from six others. Three of the inhabitants were killed and five were dangerously wounded. The town was immediately in commotion. Such was the temper, force, and number of the inhabitants, that nothing but an engagement to remove the troops out of the town, together with the advice of moderate men, prevented the townsmen from falling on the soldiers. The killed were buried in one vault, and in a most respectful

ſpectful manner, to expreſs the indignation of the inhabitants at the ſlaughter of their brethren by ſoldiers quartered among them, in violation of their civil liberties. Preſton the captain who commanded, and the party which fired on the inhabitants, were committed to jail, and afterwards tried. The captain and ſix of the men were acquitted. Two were brought in guilty of manſlaughter. It appeared on the trial, that the ſoldiers were abuſed, inſulted, threatened, and pelted, before they fired. It was alſo proved, that only ſeven guns were fired by the eight priſoners. Theſe circumſtances induced the jury to make a favourable verdict. The reſult of the trial reflected great honour on John Adams and Joſiah Quincy, the council for the priſoners, and alſo on the integrity of the jury, who ventured to give an upright verdict, in defiance of popular opinions.

The events of this tragical night ſunk deep in the minds of the people, and were made ſubſervient to important purpoſes. The anniverſary of it was obſerved with great ſolemnity. Eloquent orators were ſucceſſively employed to deliver an annual oration, to preſerve the remembrance of it freſh in their minds. On theſe occaſions the bleſſings of liberty—the horrors of ſlavery—the dangers of a ſtanding army—the rights of the Colonies, and a variety of ſuch topics were preſented to the public view, under their moſt pleaſing and alarming forms. Theſe annual orations adminiſtered fuel to the fire of liberty, and kept it burning with an inceſſant flame.

The obſtacles to returning harmony, which have already been mentioned, were increaſed, by making the governor and judges in Maſſachuſetts independent of the province. Formerly, they had been paid by yearly grants from the Aſſembly, but about this time proviſion was made for paying their ſalaries by the Crown. This was reſented as a dangerous innovation, as an infraction of their charters, and as deſtroying that balance of power which is eſſential to free governments. That the Crown ſhould pay the ſalary of the chief juſtice, was repreſented by the Aſſembly, as a ſpecies of bribery, tending to bias his judicial determinations. They made it the foundation for

impeaching Mr. Justice Oliver, before the Governor, but he excepted to their proceedings as unconstitutional. The Assembly, nevertheless, gained two points: They rendered the Governor more odious to the inhabitants, and increased the public respect for themselves, as the counterpart of the British House of Commons, and as guardians of the rights of the people.

A personal animosity between Lieut. Governor Hutchinson and some distinguished patriots in Massachusetts, contributed to perpetuate a flame of discontent in that province after it had elsewhere visibly abated. This was worked up, in the year 1773, to a high pitch, by a singular combination of circumstances. Some letters had been written, in the course of the dispute, by Governor Hutchinson, Lieut. Governor Oliver, and others, in Boston, to persons in power and office in England, which contained a very unfavourable representation of the state of public affairs, and tended to shew the necessity of coercive measures, and of changing the chartered system of government, to secure the obedience of the province. These letters fell into the hands of Dr. Franklin, agent of the province, who transmitted them to Boston. The indignation and animosity which was excited on the receipt of this, knew no bounds. The House of Assembly agreed on a petition and remonstrance to his Majesty, in which they charged their Governor and Lieut. Governor with being betrayers of their trusts and of the people they governed, and of giving private, partial, and false information. They also declared them enemies to the Colonies, and prayed for justice against them, and for their speedy removal from their places. These charges were carried through by a majority of 82 to 12. (Jan. 29, 1774.)

This petition and remonstrance being transmitted to England, the merits of it were discussed before his Majesty's privy council. After an hearing before that board, in which Dr. Franklin represented the province of Massachusetts, the Governor and Lieut. Governor were acquitted. Mr. Wedderburne, who defended the accused royal servants, in the course of his pleadings, inveighed against Dr. Franklin in the severest language, as the fomenter of the disputes between the two countries. It

was

was no protection to this venerable sage, that being the agent of Massachusetts, he conceived it his duty to inform his constituents of letters written on public affairs, calculated to overturn their chartered constitution. The age, respectability, and high literary character of the subject of Mr. Wedderburne's philippic, turned the attention of the public on the transaction. The insult offered to one of their public agents, and especially to one who was both the idol and ornament of his native country, sunk deep in the minds of the Americans. That a faithful servant, whom they loved and almost adored, should be insulted for discharging his official duty, rankled in their hearts. Dr. Franklin was also immediately dismissed from the office of deputy postmaster general, which he held under the crown. It was not only by his transmission of these letters that he had given offence to the British ministry, but by his popular writings in favour of America. Two pieces of his, in particular, had lately attracted a large share of public attention, and had an extensive influence on both sides of the Atlantic. The one purported to be an edict from the King of Prussia, for taxing the inhabitants of Great Britain, as descendants of emigrants from his dominions. The other was entitled, "Rules for reducing a great empire to a small one." In both of these he had exposed the claims of the Mother Country, and the proceedings of the British Ministry, with the severity of poignant satire.

For ten years there had now been but little intermission to the disputes between Great Britain and her Colonies. Their respective claims had never been compromised on middle ground. The calm which followed the repeal of the stamp act, was in a few months disturbed by the revenue act of the year 1767. The tranquility which followed the repeal of five sixths of that act in the year 1770, was nothing more than a truce. The reservation of the duty on tea, made as an avowed evidence of the claims of Great Britain to tax her Colonies, kept alive the jealousy of the Colonists, while at the same time the stationing of a standing army in Massachusetts—the continuance of a board of commissioners in Boston—the constituting the governors and judges of that province

indepen-

independent of the people, were conſtant ſources of irritation. The altercations which, at this period, were common between the royal governors and the provincial aſſemblies, together with numerous vindications of the claims of America, made the ſubject familiar to the Coloniſts. The ground of the controverſy was canvaſſed in every company. The more the Americans read, reaſoned, and converſed on the ſubject, the more were they convinced of their right to the excluſive diſpoſal of their property. This was followed by a determination to reſiſt all encroachments on that palladium of Britiſh liberty. They were as ſtrongly convinced of their right to refuſe and reſiſt parliamentary taxation, as the ruling powers of Great Britain, of their right to demand and enforce their ſubmiſſion to it.

The claims of the two countries being thus irreconcileably oppoſed to each other, the partial calm which followed the conceſſion of Parliament in 1770, was liable to diſturbance from every incident. Under ſuch circumſtances, nothing leſs than the moſt guarded conduct on both ſides could prevent a renewal of the controverſy. Inſtead of following thoſe prudential meaſures which would have kept the ground of the diſpute out of ſight, an impolitic ſcheme was concerted between the Britiſh Miniſtry and the Eaſt India Company, which placed the claims of Great Britain and of her Colonies in hoſtile array againſt each other.

CHAPTER III.

Tea is ſent by the Eaſt India Company to America, and is refuſed or deſtroyed by the Coloniſts. Boſton port act, &c.

IN the year 1773 commenced a new æra of the American controverſy. To underſtand this in its origin, it is neceſſary to recur to the period when the ſolitary duty on tea was excepted from the partial repeal of the revenue act of 1767. When the duties which had been laid on glaſs, paper, and painters colours, were taken off, a re-

respectable minority in Parliament contended, that the duty on tea should also be removed. To this it was replied, "That as the Americans denied the legality of taxing them, a total repeal would be a virtual acquiescence in their claims; and that, in order to preserve the rights of the Mother Country, it was necessary to retain the preamble, and at least one of the taxed articles." It was answered, that a partial repeal would be a source of endless discontent, and that the tax on tea would not defray the expences of collecting it. The motion in favour of a total appeal was thrown out by a great majority. As the Parliament thought fit to retain the tax on tea, for an evidence of their right of taxation, the Americans, in like manner, to be consistent with themselves, in denying that right, discontinued the importation of that commodity. While there was no attempt to introduce tea into the Colonies against this declared sense of the inhabitants, these opposing claims were in no danger of collision. In that case, the Mother Country might have solaced herself with her ideal rights, and the Colonies, with their favourite opinion of a total exemption from parliamentary taxes, without disturbing the public peace. This mode of compromising the dispute, which seemed at first designed as a salvo for the honour and consistency of both parties, was, by the interference of the East India Company, in combination with the British Ministry, completely overset.

The expected revenue for tea failed in consequence of the American association to import none, on which a duty was charged. This, though partially violated in some of the Colonies, was well observed in others, and particularly in Pennsylyania, where the duty was never paid on more than one chest of that commodity. This proceeded as much from the spirit of gain as of patriotism. The merchants found means of supplying their countrymen with tea, smuggled from countries to which the power of Britain did not extend. They doubtless conceived themselves to be supporting the rights of their country, by refusing to purchase tea from Britain, but they also reflected that if they could bring the same commodity to market, free from duty, their profits would be proportionably greater.

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The love of gain was not peculiar to the American merchants. From the diminiſhed exportation to the Colonies, the warehouſes of the Britiſh Eaſt India Company had in them about ſeventeen millions of pounds of tea, for which a market could not readily be procured. The Miniſtry and Eaſt India Company unwilling to loſe, the one the expected revenue from the ſale of tea in America---the other, their uſual commercial profits, agreed on a meaſure by which they ſuppoſed both would be ſecured.

The Eaſt India Company were by law authorized to export their tea, free of duties, to all places whatſoever. By this regulation, tea, though loaded with an exceptionable duty, would come cheaper to the Colonies than before it had been made a ſource of revenue: for the duty taken off it, when exported from Great Britain, was greater than what was to be paid on its importation into the Colonies. Confident of ſucceſs in finding a market for their tea, thus reduced in its price, and alſo of collecting a duty on its importation and ſale in the Colonies, the Eaſt India Company freighted ſeveral ſhips with teas for the different Colonies, and appointed agents for the diſpoſal thereof. This meaſure united ſeveral intereſts in oppoſition to its execution. The patriotiſm of the Americans was corroborated by ſeveral auxiliary aids, no ways connected with the cauſe of liberty,

The merchants in England were alarmed at the loſſes that muſt accrue to themſelves from the exportations of the Eaſt India Company, and from the ſales going through the hands of conſignees. Letters were written from that country to colonial patriots, urging that oppoſition to which they of themſelves were prone.

The ſmugglers, who were both numerous and powerful, could not reliſh a ſcheme which by underſelling them, and taking a profitable branch of buſineſs out of their hands, threatened a diminution of their gains. The Coloniſts were too ſuſpicious of the deſigns of Great Britain to be impoſed upon.

The cry of endangered liberty, once more excited an alarm from New-Hampſhire to Georgia. The firſt op-

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poſition to the execution of the ſcheme adopted by the Eaſt India Company began with the American merchants. They ſaw a profitable branch of their trade likely to be loſt, and the benefits of it to be transferred to people in Great Britain. They felt for the wound that would be inflicted on the country's claim of exemption from parliamentary taxation, but they felt with equal ſenſibility for the loſſes they would ſuſtain by the diverſion of the ſtreams of commerce into unuſual channels. Though the oppoſition originated in the ſelfiſhneſs of the merchants, it did not end there. The great body of the people, from principles of the pureſt patriotiſm, were brought over to ſecond their wiſhes: they conſidered the whole ſcheme as calculated to ſeduce them into an acquieſcence with the views of Parliament for raiſing an American revenue. Much pains were taken to enlighten the Coloniſts on this ſubject, and to convince them of the imminent hazard to which their liberties were expoſed.

The provincial patriots inſiſted largely on the perſevering determination of the Parent State to eſtabliſh her claim of taxation, by compelling the ſale of tea in the Colonies againſt the ſolemn reſolutions and declared ſenſe of the inhabitants, and that at a time when the commercial intercourſe of the countries was renewed, and their ancient harmony faſt returning. The propoſed venders of the tea were repreſented as revenue officers, employed in the collection of an unconſtitutional tax impoſed by Great Britain. The Coloniſts reaſoned with themſelves, that as the duty and the price of the commodity were inſeparably blended, if the tea was ſold, every purchaſer would pay a tax impoſed by the Britiſh Parliament, as part of the purchaſe money. To obviate this evil, and to prevent the liberties of a great country from being ſacrificed by inconſiderate purchaſers, ſundry town meetings were held in the capitals of the different provinces, and combinations were formed to obſtruct the ſales of the tea ſent by the Eaſt India Company.

The resolutions entered into by the inhabitants of Philadelphia on October the 18th 1773, afford a good specimen of the whole——these were as follows:

1. That the disposal of their own property is the inherent right of freemen; that there can be no property in that which another can, of right, take from us without our consent; that the claim of Parliament to tax America is, in other words, a claim of right to levy contributions on us at pleasure.

2. That the duty imposed by Parliament upon tea landed in America, is a tax on the Americans, or levying contributions on them without their consent.

3. That the express purpose for which the tax is levied on the Americans, namely, for the support of government, administration of justice, and defence of his Majesty's dominions in America, has a direct tendency to render assemblies useless, and to introduce arbitrary government and slavery.

4. That a virtuous and steady opposition to this ministerial plan of governing America is absolutely necessary to preserve even the shadow of liberty, and is a duty which every freeman in America owes to his country, to himself, and to his posterity.

5. That the resolution lately entered into by the East India Company to send out their tea to America, subject to the payment of duties on its being landed here, is an open attempt to enforce this ministerial plan, and a violent attack upon the liberties of America.

6. That it is the duty of every American to oppose this attempt.

7. That whoever shall, directly or indirectly, countenance this attempt, or in any wise aid or abet in unloading, receiving, or vending the tea sent, or to be sent out by the East India Company, while it remains subject to the payment of a duty here, is an enemy to his country.

8. That a committee be immediately chosen to wait on those gentlemen who, it is reported, are appointed by the East India Company to receive and sell the said tea, and request them, from a regard to their own character and

and the peace and good order of the city and province, immediately to reſign their appointment."

As the time approached when the arrival of the tea ſhips might be ſoon expected, ſuch meaſures were adopted as ſeemed moſt likely to prevent the landing of their cargoes. The tea conſignees appointed by the Eaſt India Company were in ſeveral places compelled to relinquiſh their appointments, and no others could be found hardy enough to act in their ſtead, The pilots in the river Delaware were warned not to conduct any of the tea ſhips into their harbour. In New-York popular vengeance was denounced againſt all who would contribute in any meaſure to forward the views, of the Eaſt India Company. The captains of the New-York and Philadelphia ſhips being apprized of the reſolution of the people, and fearing the conſequences of landing a commodity, charged with an odious duty, in violation of their declared public ſentiments, concluded to return directly to Great Britain, without making an entry at the cuſtom-houſe.

It was otherwiſe in Maſſachuſetts. The tea ſhips deſigned for the ſupply of Boſton were conſigned to the ſons, couſins, and particular friends of Governor Hutchinſon. When they were called upon to reſign, they anſwered, "That it was out of their power." The collector refuſed to give a clearance, unleſs the veſſels were diſcharged of dutiable articles as by law directed. The Governor refuſed to give a paſs for the veſſels unleſs properly qualified from the cuſtom-houſe. The Governor likewiſe requeſted Admiral Montague to guard the paſſages out of the harbour, and gave orders to ſuffer no veſſels, coaſters excepted, to paſs the fortreſs from the town without a paſs ſigned by himſelf. From a combination of theſe circumſtances, the return of the tea veſſels from Boſton was rendered impoſſible. The inhabitants then had no option but to prevent the landing of the tea, or to ſuffer it to be landed, and depend on the unanimity of the people not to purchaſe it, or to deſtroy the tea, or to ſuffer a deep laid ſcheme againſt their ſacred liberties to take effect. The firſt would have required inceſ-

ſtant watching by night as well as by day, for a period of time, the duration of which no one could compute. The ſecond would have been viſionary to childiſhneſs, by ſuſpending the liberties of a growing country, on the ſelf-denial and diſcretion of every tea drinker in the province. They viewed the tea as the vehicle of an unconſtitutional tax, and as inſeparably aſſociated with it. To avoid the one, they reſolved to deſtroy the other. About ſeventeen perſons, dreſſed as Indians, repaired to the tea ſhips, broke open 342 cheſts of tea, and without doing any other damage, diſcharged their contents into the water.

Thus by the inflexibility of the Governor, the iſſue of this buſineſs was different at Boſton from what it was elſewhere. The whole cargoes of tea were returned from New-York and Philadelphia. That which was ſent to Charleſton was landed and ſtored, but not offered for ſale. Mr. Hutchinſon had repeatedly urged Government, at home, to be firm and perſevering, he could not therefore, conſiſtent with his honour, depart from a line of conduct he had ſo often and ſo ſtrongly recommended to his ſuperiors. He alſo believed that the inhabitants would not dare to perfect their engagements, and flattered himſelf that they would deſiſt when the critical moment arrived.

Admitting the rectitude of the American claims of exemption from parliamentary taxation, the deſtruction of the tea by the Boſtonians was warranted by the great law of ſelf-preſervation; for it was not poſſible for them, by any other means within the compaſs of probability, to diſcharge the duty they owed to their country.

The event of this buſineſs was very different from what had been expected in England. The Coloniſts acted with ſo much union and ſyſtem, that there was not a ſingle cheſt of any of the cargoes ſent out by the Eaſt India Company on this occaſion, ſold for their benefit.

Intelligence of theſe proceedings was, on the 7th of March 1774, communicated in a meſſage from the Throne to both Houſes of Parliament. In this communication the conduct of the Coloniſts was repreſented as not

not only obſtructing the commerce of Great Britain, but as ſubverſive of its conſtitution. The meſſage was accompanied with a number of papers, containing copies and extracts of letters, from the ſeveral royal Governors and others, from which it appeared that the oppoſition to the ſale of the tea was not peculiar to Maſſachuſetts, but common to all the Colonies. Theſe papers were accompanied with accounts ſetting forth, that nothing ſhort of parliamentary interference was capable of re-eſtabliſhing order among the turbulent Coloniſts, and that therefore deciſive meaſures ſhould be immediately adopted for ſecuring the dependence of the Colonies. If the right of levying taxes on the Americans was veſted in the Parent State, theſe inferences were well founded; but if it was not, their conduct in reſiſting an invaſion of their rights was juſtified, not only by many examples in the hiſtory of Britain, but by the ſpirit of the conſtitution of that country which they were oppoſing.

By the deſtruction of the tea, the people of Boſton had incurred the ſanction of penal laws. Thoſe in Great Britain who wiſhed for an opportunity to take vengeance on that town, commonly ſuppoſed by them to be the mother of ſedition and rebellion, rejoiced that her inhabitants had laid themſelves open to caſtigation.

It was well known that the throwing of the tea into the river, did not originate with the perſons who were the immediate inſtruments of that act of violence, but that the whole had been concerted at a public meeting, and was, in a qualified ſenſe, the act of the town. The univerſal indignation which in Great Britain was excited againſt the people of Boſton, pointed out to the Miniſtry the ſuitableneſs of the preſent moment for humbling them. Though the oſtenſible ground of complaint was nothing more than a treſpaſs on private property, committed by private perſons, yet it was well known to be part of a long digeſted plan of reſiſtance to parliamentary taxation. Every meaſure that might be purſued on the occaſion, ſeemed to be big with the fate of the empire. To proceed in the uſual forms of law, appeared to the rulers in Great Britain to be a departure from their dignity

dignity. It was urged by the Miniſtry that Parliament, and Parliament only, was capable of re-eſtabliſhing tranquillity among theſe turbulent people, and of bringing order out of confuſion. To ſtifle all oppoſition from the merchants, the public papers were filled with writings which ſtated the impoſſibility of carrying on a future trade to America, if this flagrant outrage on commerce ſhould go unpuniſhed.

It was in vain urged by the minority that no good could ariſe from coercion, unleſs the minds of the Americans were made eaſy on the ſubject of taxation. Equally vain was a motion for a retroſpect into the conduct of Miniſtry, which had provoked their reſiſtance.

The Parliament diſcovered an averſion from looking back to the original ground of the diſpute, and confined themſelves ſolely to the late miſbehaviour of the Americans, without any inquiry into the provoking cauſes thereof.

The violence of the Boſtonians in deſtroying an article of commerce was largely inſiſted upon, without any indulgence for the jealous ſpirit of liberty, in the deſcendents of Engliſhmen. The connection between the tea, and the unconſtitutional duty impoſed thereon, was overlooked, and the public mind of Great Britain ſolely fixed on the obſtructions given to commerce by the turbulent Coloniſts. The ſpirit raiſed againſt the Americans became as high, and as ſtrong, as their moſt inveterate enemies could deſire. This was not confined to the common people, but took poſſeſſion of legiſlators, whoſe unclouded minds ought to be exalted above the miſts of prejudice or partiality. Such, when they conſult on public affairs, ſhould be free from the impulſes of paſſion, for it rarely happens that reſolutions adopted in anger are founded in wiſdom. The Parliament in Great Britain, tranſported with indignation againſt the people of Boſton, in a fit of rage reſolved to take legiſlative vengeance on that devoted town.

Diſregarding the forms of her own conſtitution, by which none are to be condemned unheard, or puniſhed without a trial, a bill was finally paſſed, on the 17th day after

after it was firſt moved for, by which the port of Boſton was virtually blocked up, for it was legally precluded from the privilege of landing and diſcharging, or of lading and ſhipping of goods, wares, and merchandiſe. The miniſter who propoſed this meaſure, ſtated in ſupport of it, that the oppoſition to the authority of Parliament had always originated in that Colony, and had always been inſtigated by the ſeditious proceedings of the town of Boſton: that it was therefore neceſſary to make an example of that town, which by an unparalleled outrage had violated the freedom of commerce; that Great Britain would be wanting in the protection ſhe owed to her peaceable ſubjects, if ſhe did not puniſh ſuch an inſult in an exemplary manner. He therefore propoſed, that the town of Boſton ſhould be obliged to pay for the tea which had been deſtroyed. He was farther of opinion, that making a pecuniary ſatisfaction for the injury committed, would not alone be ſufficient, but that in addition thereto, ſecurity muſt be given in future, that trade may be ſafely carried on—property protected—laws obeyed—and duties paid. He urged, therefore, that it would be proper to take away from Boſton the privilege of a port, until his Majeſty ſhould be ſatisfied in theſe particulars, and publicly declare in council, on a proper certificate, of the good behaviour of the town, that he was ſo ſatisfied. Until this ſhould happen, he propoſed that the cuſtom houſe officers ſhould be removed to Salem. The miniſter hoped that this act would execute itſelf, or at moſt, that a few frigates would ſecure its execution. He alſo hoped, that the proſpect of advantage to the town of Salem, from its being made the ſeat of the cuſtom houſe, and from the excluſion of the port of Boſton, would detach them from the intereſt of the latter, and diſpoſe them to ſupport a meaſure from which they had ſo much to expect. It was alſo preſumed that the other Colonies would leave Boſton to ſuffer the puniſhment due to her demerits. The abettors of parliamentary ſupremacy flattered themſelves that this decided conduct of Great Britain would, for ever, extinguiſh all oppoſition from the refractory Coloniſts to the claims of the

the Mother Country; and the apparent equity of obliging a delinquent town to make reparation for an injury occaſioned by the factious ſpirit of its inhabitants, ſilenced many of the friends of America. The conſequences reſulting from this meaſure were the reverſe of what were wiſhed for by the firſt, and dreaded by the laſt.

By the operation of the Boſton port act, the preceding ſituation of its inhabitants, and that of the Eaſt India Company, was reverſed. The former had more reaſon to complain of the diſproportionate penalty to which they were indiſcriminately ſubjected, than the latter of that outrage on their property, for which puniſhment had been inflicted. Hitherto the Eaſt India Company were the injured party, but from the paſſing of this act, the balance of injury was on the oppoſite ſide. If wrongs received entitled the former to reparation, the latter had a much ſtronger title to the ſame ground. For the act of ſeventeen or eighteen individuals, twice as many thouſands were involved in one general calamity.

Both parties viewed the caſe on a much larger ſcale than that of municipal law. The people of Boſton alleged, in vindication of their conduct, that the tea was a weapon aimed at their liberties, and that the ſame principles of ſelf-preſervation which juſtify the breaking of the aſſaſſin's ſword uplifted for deſtruction, equally authoriſed the deſtruction of that tea which was the vehicle of an unconſtitutional tax, ſubverſive of their liberties. The Parliament of Great Britain conſidered the act of the people of Boſton, in deſtroying the tea, as an open defiance of that country. The demerit of the action, as an offence againſt property, was loſt, in the ſuppoſed ſuperior demerit of treaſonable intention to emancipate themſelves from a ſtate of colonial dependance. The Americans conceived the caſe to be intimately connected with their liberties, the inhabitants of Great Britain with their ſupremacy; the former conſidered it as a duty they owed their country, to make a common cauſe with the people of Boſton, the latter thought themſelves under equal obligations to ſupport the privileges of Parliament.

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On the third reading of the Boſton port bill, a petition was preſented by the Lord Mayor, in the name of ſeveral natives and inhabitants of North America, then reſiding in London. It was drawn with great force of language, and ſtated, that "the proceedings of Parliament againſt Boſton were repugnant to every principle of law and juſtice, and eſtabliſhed a precedent by which no man in America could enjoy a moment's ſecurity." The friends of parliamentary ſupremacy had long regretted the democratic conſtitutions of the provinces as adverſe to their ſchemes. They ſaw with concern the ſteady oppoſition that was given to their meaſures by the American legiſlatures. Theſe conſtitutions were planned when Great Britain neither feared nor cared for her Colonies. Not ſuſpecting that ſhe was laying the foundation of future ſtates, ſhe granted charters that gave to the people ſo much of the powers of government as enabled them to make not only a formidable, but a regular conſtitutional oppoſition to the country from which they ſprung.

Long had her rulers wiſhed for an opportunity to revoke theſe charters, and to new-model theſe governments. The preſent moment ſeemed favourable to this deſign. The temper of the nation was high, and the reſentment againſt the province of Maſſachuſetts general and violent. The late outrages in Boſton furniſhed a tolerable pretence for the attempt. An act of the Britiſh Parliament ſpeedily followed the one for ſhutting up the port of Boſton, entitled, an "Act for the better regulating the government of Maſſachuſetts." The object of this was to alter the charter of the province in the following particulars: The council or ſecond branch of the legiſlature heretofore elected by the general court, was to be, from the firſt of Auguſt 1774, appointed by the Crown. The royal Governor was alſo by the ſame act inveſted with the power of appointing and removing all judges of the inferior courts of common pleas—commiſſioners of oyer and terminer—the attorney general—provoſt marſhal—juſtice—ſheriffs, &c. The town meetings which were ſanctioned by the charter, were, with a few exceptions,

tions, forbidden to be held, without the leave of the Governor or Lieutenant Governor in writing, expreſſing the ſpecial buſineſs of ſaid meeting, firſt had and obtained; and with a farther reſtriction, that no matter ſhould be treated of at theſe meetings, excepting the election of public officers, and the buſineſs noticed in the leave given by the Governor or Lieutenant Governor. Jurymen who had been before elected by the freeholders and inhabitants of the ſeveral towns, were to be, by this new act, all ſummoned and returned by the ſheriffs of the reſpective counties. The whole executive government was taken out of the hands of the people, and the nomination of all important officers veſted in the King or his Governor.

This act excited a greater alarm than the port act. The one effected only the metropolis, the other the whole province. The one had the appearance of being merited, as it was well known that an act of violence had been committed by its inhabitants, under the ſanction of a town meeting; but the other had no ſtronger juſtifying reaſon than that the propoſed alterations were, in the opinion of the Parliament, become abſolutely neceſſary, in order to the preſervation of the peace and good order of the ſaid province. In ſupport of this bill, the Miniſter who brought it in alledged, that an executive power was wanting in the country. The very people, ſaid he, who commit the riots are the *poſſe comitatus* in which the force of the civil power conſiſts. He farther urged the futility of making laws, the execution of which, under the preſent form of government in Maſſachuſetts, might be ſo eaſily evaded, and therefore contended for a neceſſity to alter the whole frame of their conſtitution, as far as related to its executive and judicial powers. In oppoſition it was urged, that the taking away the civil conſtitution of a whole people, ſecured by a ſolemn charter, upon general charges of delinquencies and defects, was a ſtretch of power of the moſt arbitrary and dangerous nature.

By the Engliſh conſtitution charters were ſacred, and only revokable by a due courſe of law, and on a convic-

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tion of miſconduct. They were ſolemn compacts between the prince and the people, and exempt from the conſtitutional power of either party. The abettors of the Britiſh ſchemes reaſoned in a ſummary way. They ſaid, "the Colonies, particularly Maſſachuſetts, by their circular letters, aſſociations and town meetings, have for years paſt thwarted all the meaſures of Government, and are meditating independency. This turbulent ſpirit of theirs is foſtered by their conſtitution, which inveſts them with too much power to be conſiſtent with the ſtate of ſubordination. Let us therefore lay the ax to the root—new-model their charter, and lop off thoſe privileges which they have abuſed."

When the human mind is agitated with paſſion it rarely diſcerns its own intereſt, and but faintly foreſees conſequences. Had the Parliament ſtopped ſhort with the Boſton port act, the motives to union and to make a common cauſe with that metropolis, would have been feeble, perhaps ineffectual to have rouſed the other provinces; but the arbitrary mutilation of the important privileges contained in a ſolemn charter, without a trial—without a hearing, by the will of Parliament, convinced the moſt moderate that the cauſe of Maſſachuſetts was the cauſe of all the provinces.

It readily occurred to thoſe who guided the helm of Great Britain, that riots would probably take place, in attempting the execution of the acts juſt mentioned. They alſo diſcerned that ſuch was the temper of the people, that trials for murders committed in ſuppreſſing riots, if held in Maſſachuſetts, would ſeldom terminate in favour of the parties who were engaged on the ſide of Government. To make this ſyſtem complete, it was neceſſary to go one ſtep farther, and to ſcreen their active friends from the apprehended partiality of ſuch trials. It was therefore provided by law, that if any perſon was indicted for murder, or for any capital offence committed in aiding magiſtracy, that the Governor might ſend the perſon ſo indicted to another Colony, or to Great Britain to be tried. This law was the ſubject of ſevere comments. It was conſidered as an act of indemnity to thoſe who ſhould

embrue their hands in the blood of their fellow citizens. It was aſked how the relations of a murdered man could effectually proſecute, if they muſt go three thouſand miles to attend that buſineſs. It was contended that the act, by ſtopping the uſual court of juſtice, would probably give riſe to aſſaſſinations and dark revenge among individuals, and encourage all kinds of lawleſs violence. The charge of partiality was retorted. For ſaid they, "If a party ſpirit againſt the authority of Great Britain would condemn an active officer in Maſſachuſetts as a murderer, the ſame party ſpirit for preſerving the authority of Great Britain would, in that country, acquit a murderer as a ſpirited performer of his duty." The caſe of Captain Preſton was alſo quoted as a proof of the impartial adminiſtration of juſtice in Maſſachuſetts.

The ſame natives of America who had petitioned againſt the Boſton port bill, preſented a ſecond one againſt theſe two bills. With uncommon energy of language, they pointed out many conſtitutional objections againſt them, and concluded with fervently beſeeching, "that the Parliament would not, by paſſing them, reduce their countrymen to an abject ſtate of miſery and humiliation, or drive them to the laſt reſource of deſpair." The Lords of the minority entered alſo a proteſt againſt the paſſing of each of theſe bills.

It was fortunate for the people of Boſton, and thoſe who wiſhed to promote a combination of the Colonies againſt Great Britain, that theſe three ſeveral laws paſſed nearly at the ſame time. They were preſented in quick progreſſion, either in the form of bills or of acts, to the conſideration of the inflamed Americans, and produced effects on their minds, infinitely greater than could have been expected from either, eſpecially from the Boſton port act alone.

When the fire of indignation, excited by the firſt, was burning, intelligence of theſe other acts operated like fuel, and made it flame out with increaſing vehemence. The three laws were conſidered as forming a complete ſyſtem of tyranny, from the operation of which, there was no chance of making a peaceable eſcape.

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"By the firſt," ſaid they, "the property of unoffending thouſands is arbitrarily taken away, for the act of a few individuals; by the ſecond, our chartered liberties are annihilated; and by the third, our lives may be deſtroyed with impunity. Property, liberty, and life, are all ſacrificed on the altar of miniſterial vengeance." This mode of reaſoning was not peculiar to Maſſachuſetts. Theſe three acts of Parliament, contrary to the expectation of thoſe who planned them, became a cement of a firm union among the Colonies, from New-Hampſhire to Georgia. They now openly ſaid, "our charters and other rights and immunities muſt depend on the pleaſure of Parliament." They were ſenſible that they had all concurred, more or leſs, in the ſame line of oppoſition which had provoked theſe ſevere ſtatutes againſt Maſſachuſetts; and they believed that vengeance, though delayed, was not remitted, and that the only favour the leaſt culpable could expect, was to be the laſt that would be devoured. The friends of the Colonies contended, that theſe laws were in direct contradiction to the letter and the ſpirit of the Britiſh conſtitution. Their oppoſers could ſupport them on no ſtronger grounds than thoſe of political neceſſity and expedience. They acknowledged them to be contrary to the eſtabliſhed mode of proceeding, but defended them as tending ultimately to preſerve the conſtitution, from the meditated independency of the Colonies.

Such was the temper of the people in England, that the acts hitherto paſſed were popular. A general opinion had gone forth in the Mother Country, that the people of Maſſachuſetts, by their violent oppoſition to Government, had drawn on themſelves merited correction.

The Parliament did not ſtop here, but proceeded one ſtep farther, which inflamed their enemies in America, and loſt them friends in Great Britain. The general clamor in the provinces was, that the proceedings in the Parliament were arbitrary and unconſtitutional. Before they completed their memorable ſeſſion in the beginning of the year 1774, they paſſed an act reſpecting the government of Quebec, which in the opinion of their friends merited theſe appellations. By this act the government of that province

province was made to extend ſouthward to the Ohio, and weſtward to the banks of the Miſſiſſippi, and northward to the boundary of the Hudſon's Bay Company. The principal objects of the act were to form a legiſlative council for all the affairs of the province, except taxation, which council ſhould be appointed by the Crown to make; the office to be held during pleaſure, and his Majeſty's Roman Catholic ſubjects to be entitled to a place therein—to eſtabliſh the French laws, and a trial without jury in civil caſes, and the Engliſh laws, with a trial by jury in criminal—to ſecure to the Roman Catholic clergy, except the regulars, the legal enjoyment of their eſtates, and their tythes, from all who were of their own religion. Not only the ſpirit but the letter of this act were ſo contrary to the Engliſh conſtitution, that it diminiſhed the popularity of the meaſures which had been formed againſt the Americans.

Among the more ſouthern Coloniſts, it was conceived that its evident object was to make the inhabitants of Canada fit inſtruments in the hands of power, to reduce them to a ſtate of ſlavery.

They well remembered the embarraſſments occaſioned to them in the late war between France and England, by the French inhabitants of Canada—they ſuppoſed that the Britiſh adminiſtration meant, at this time, to uſe theſe people in the ſame line of attack, for their ſubjugation. As Great Britain had new-modelled the chartered government of Maſſachuſetts, and claimed an authority ſo to do in every province, the Coloniſts were apprehenſive, that, in the plenitude of her power, ſhe would impoſe on each of them, in their turns, a conſtitution ſimilar to what ſhe had projected for the province of Canada.

They foreſaw, or thought they foreſaw, the annihilation of their ancient aſſemblies, and their whole legiſlative buſineſs transferred to the creatures of the Crown. The legal parliamentary right to a maintenance conferred on the clergy of the Roman Catholic religion, gave great offence to many in England, but the political conſequences expected to reſult from it, were moſt dreaded by the Coloniſts.

They viewed the whole act as an evidence that hostilities were intended against them, and that part of it which respected religion, as calculated to make Roman Catholics subservient to the purposes of military coercion.

The session of Parliament which passed these memorable acts, had stretched far into summer. As it drew near a close the most sanguine expectations were indulged, that from the resolution and great unanimity of Parliament on all American questions, the submission of the Colonies would be immediate, and their future obedience and tranquillity effectually secured. The triumphs and congratulations of the friends of the Ministry were unusually great.

In passing the acts which have been just mentioned, dissentients in favour of America were unusually few. The ministerial majority, believing that the refractory Colonists depended chiefly on the countenance of their English abettors, were of opinion, that as soon as they received intelligence of the decrease of their friends, and of the decisive conduct of Parliament, they would acquiesce in the will of Great Britain—the fame and grandeur of the nation was such, that it was never imagined they would seriously dare to contend with so formidable a people. The late triumphs of Great Britain had made such an impression on her rulers, that they believed the Americans, on seeing the ancient spirit of the nation revive, would not risque a trial of prowess with those fleets and armies, which the combined force of France and Spain were unable to resist. By an impious confidence in their superior strength, they precipitated the nation into rash measures, from the dire effects of which, the world may learn a useful lesson.

CHAP. IV.

Proceedings of the Colonies in 1774, in consequence of the Boston Port Act, viz.

THE winter which followed the destruction of the tea in Boston, was an anxious one to those of the Colonists who were given to reflection. Many conjectures were

were formed about the line of conduct Great Britain would probably adopt, for the support of her dignity. The fears of the most timid were more than realized by
1774. the news of the Boston Port Bill. This arrived on the 10th of May, and its operation was to commence the first of the next month. Various town meetings were called to deliberate on the state of public affairs. On the 13th of May, the town of Boston passed the following vote:

"That it is the opinion of this town, that if the other Colonies come into a joint resolution to stop all importation from Great Britain and the West Indies, till the act for blocking up this harbour be repealed, the same will prove the salvation of North-America and her liberties. On the other hand, if they continue their exports and imports, there is high reason to fear that fraud, power, and the most odious oppression, will rise triumphant over justice, right, social happiness, and freedom. And, moreover, that this vote be transmitted by the moderator to all our sister Colonies, in the name and behalf of this town."

Copies of this vote were transmitted to each of the Colonies. The opposition to Great Britain had hitherto called forth the pens of the ingenious, and in some instances imposed the self-denial of non-importation agreements: but the bulk of the people had little to do with the dispute. The spirited conduct of the people of Boston in destroying the tea, and the alarming precedents set by Great Britain, in consequence thereof, brought subjects into discussion, with which every peasant and day labourer was concerned.

The patriots who had hitherto guided the helm, knew well that if the other Colonies did not support the people of Boston, they must be crushed, and it was equally obvious, that in their coercion a precedent, injurious to liberty, would be established. It was, therefore, the interest of Boston to draw in the other Colonies. It was also the interest of the patriots in all the Colonies, to bring over the bulk of the people to adopt such efficient measures as were likely to extricate the inhabitants of Boston from the unhappy situation in which they were involved

involved. To effect theſe purpoſes much prudence as well as patriotiſm was neceſſary. The other provinces were but remotely affected by the fate of Maſſachuſetts. They were happy, and had no cauſe, on their own account, to oppoſe the government of Great Britain. That a people ſo circumſtanced ſhould take part with a diſtreſſed neighbour, at the riſque of incurring the reſentment of the Mother Country, did not accord with the ſelfiſh maxims by which ſtates, as well as individuals, are uſually governed. The ruled are, for the moſt part, prone to ſuffer as long as evils are tolerable, and in general they muſt feel before they are rouſed to contend with their oppreſſors; but the Americans acted on a contrary principle.

They commenced an oppoſition to Great Britain, and ultimately engaged in a defenſive war on ſpeculation. They were not ſo much moved by oppreſſion actually felt, as by a conviction that a foundation was laid, and a precedent about to be eſtabliſhed for future oppreſſions. To convince the bulk of the people, that they had an intereſt in foregoing a preſent good, and ſubmitting to a preſent evil, in order to obtain a future greater good, and to avoid a future greater evil, was the taſk aſſigned to the colonial patriots. But it called for the exertion of their utmoſt abilities. They effected it in a great meaſure by means of the preſs. Pamphlets, eſſays, addreſſes, and newſpaper diſſertations, were daily preſented to the public, proving that Maſſachuſetts was ſuffering in the common cauſe, and that intereſt and policy, as well as good neighbourhood, required the united exertions of all the Colonies, in ſupport of that much injured province. It was inculcated on the people, that if the miniſterial ſchemes were ſuffered to take effect in Maſſachuſetts, the other Colonies muſt expect the loſs of their charters, and that a new government would be impoſed upon them, like that projected for Quebec. The King and Parliament held no patronage in America ſufficient to oppoſe this torrent, and the few who ventured to write in their favour found a difficulty in communicating their ſentiments to the public. No penſions or preferments

awaited their exertions. Neglect and contempt were their usual portion, but popularity, consequence, and fame, were the rewards of those who stepped forward in the cause of liberty. In order to interest the great body of people, the few who were at the helm disclaimed any thing more decisive, than convening the inhabitants, and taking their sense on what was proper to be done. In the mean time great pains were taken to prepare them for the adoption of vigorous measures.

The words whigs and tories, for want of better, were now introduced, as the distinguishing names of parties. By the former, were meant those who were for making a common cause with Boston, and supporting the Colonies in their opposition to the claims of Parliament. By the latter, those who were at least so far favourers of Great Britain, that they wished either that measures, or only palliative measures, should be adopted in opposition to her schemes.

These parties were so nearly balanced in New-York, that nothing more was agreed to at the first meeting of the inhabitants, than a recommendation to call a Congress.

At Philadelphia the patriots had a delicate part to act. The government of the Colony being proprietary, a multitude of officers, connected with that interest, had much to fear from convulsions, and nothing to expect from a revolution. A still greater body of people called Quakers, denied the lawfulness of war, and, therefore, could not adopt such measures for the support of Boston, as naturally tended to produce an event so adverse to their system of religion.

The citizens of Boston not only sent forward their public letter to the citizens of Philadelphia, but accompanied it with private communications to individuals of known patriotism and influence, in which they stated the impossibility of their standing alone against the torrent of ministerial vengeance, and the indispensable necessity that the leading Colony of Pennsylvania should afford them its support and countenance. The advocates in Philadelphia, for making a common cause

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with Boſton, were fully ſenſible of the ſtate of parties in Pennſylvania. They ſaw the diſpute with Great Britain brought to a criſis, and a new ſcene opening, which required exertions different from any heretofore made. The ſucceſs of theſe, they well knew, depended on the wiſdom with which they were planned, and the union of the whole people in carrying them into execution. They ſaw the propriety of proceeding with the greateſt circumſpection: and, therefore, reſolved at their firſt meeting on nothing more than to call a general meet- May 20.
ing of the inhabitants on the next evening. At the ſecond meeting, the patriots had ſo much moderation and 21.
policy, as to urge nothing deciſive, contenting themſelves with taking the ſenſe of the inhabitants, ſimply on the propriety of ſending an anſwer to the public letter from Boſton. This was univerſally approved. The letter agreed upon was firm but temperate. "They acknowledged the difficulty of offering advice on the preſent occaſion, ſympathized with the people of Boſton in their diſtreſs, and obſerved that all lenient meaſures for their relief ſhould be firſt tried. That if the making reſtitution for the tea deſtroyed, would put an end to the unhappy controverſy, and leave the people of Boſton upon their ancient footing of conſtitutional liberty, it could not admit of a doubt what part they ſhould act: but that it was not the value of the tea, it was the indefeaſible right of giving and granting their own money, which was the matter in conſideration; that it was the common cauſe of America; and, therefore, neceſſary in their opinion, that a Congreſs of deputies from the ſeveral Colonies ſhould be convened, to deviſe means for reſtoring harmony between Great Britain and the Colonies, and preventing matters from coming to extremities. Till this could be brought about, they recommended firmneſs, prudence, and moderation, to the immediate ſufferers, aſſuring them, that the people of Pennſylvania would continue to evince a firm adherence to the cauſe of American liberty."

In order to awaken the attention of the people, a ſeries of letters was publiſhed, well calculated to rouſe

 them

them to a ſenſe of their danger, and point out the fatal conſequences of the late acts of Parliament. Every newſpaper teemed with diſſertations in favour of liberty—with debates of the members of Parliament, eſpecially with the ſpeeches of the favourers of America, and the proteſts of the diſſenting Lords. The latter had a particular effect on the Coloniſts, and were conſidered by them as irrefragable proofs that the late acts againſt Maſſachuſetts were unconſtitutional and arbitrary.

The minds of the people being thus prepared, the friends of liberty promoted a petition to the Governor for convening the aſſembly. This they knew would not be granted, and that the refuſal of it would ſmooth the way for calling the inhabitants together. The Governor having refuſed to call the aſſembly, a general meeting of
Jun. 18. the inhabitants was requeſted. About 8000 met and adopted ſundry ſpirited reſolutions. In theſe they declared, that the Boſton Port act was unconſtitutional—that it was expedient to convene a continental Congreſs—to appoint a committee for the city and county of Philadelphia, to correſpond with their ſiſter Colonies and the ſeveral counties of Pennſylvania, and to inveſt that committee with power to determine on the beſt mode for collecting the ſenſe of the province, and appointing deputies to attend a general Congreſs. Under the ſanction of this laſt reſolve, the committee appointed for that pur-
28. poſe wrote a circular letter to all the counties of the province, requeſting them to appoint deputies to a general meeting, propoſed to be held on the 15th of July; part of this letter was in the following words: "We would not offer ſuch an affront to the well-known public ſpirit of Pennſylvanians as to queſtion your zeal on the preſent occaſion. Our very exiſtence in the rank of freemen, and the ſecurity of all that ought to be dear to us, evidently depends on our conducting this great cauſe to its proper iſſue, by firmneſs, wiſdom, and magnanimity. It is with pleaſure we aſſure you, that all the Colonies from South-Carolina to New Hampſhire, are animated with one ſpirit in the common cauſe, and conſider that as this is the proper criſis for having our differences with the Mother Country

Country brought to ſome certain iſſue, and our liberties fixed upon a permanent foundation, this deſirable end can only be accompliſhed by a free communication of ſentiments, and a ſincere and fervent regard for the intereſts of our common country."

The ſeveral counties readily complied with the requeſt of the inhabitants of Philadelphia, and appointed deputies, who met at the time appointed, and paſſed ſundry reſolves, in which they reprobated the late acts of Parliament—expreſſed their ſympathy with Boſton, as ſuffering in the common cauſe—approved of holding a Congreſs, and declared their willingneſs to make any ſacrifices that might be recommended by a Congreſs, for ſecuring their liberties.

Thus, without tumult, diſorder, or divided counſels, the whole province of Pennſylvania was, by prudent management and temperate proceedings, brought into the oppoſition with its whole weight and influence. This is the more remarkable, as it is probable, that if the ſentiments of individuals had been ſeparately taken, there would have been a majority againſt involving themſelves in the conſequences of taking part with the deſtroyers of the tea at Boſton.

While theſe proceedings were carrying on in Pennſylvania, three of the moſt diſtinguiſhed patriots of Philadelphia, under colour of an excurſion of pleaſure, made a tour throughout the province, in order to diſcover the real ſentiments of the common people. They were well apprized of the conſequences of taking the lead in a diſpute which every day became more ſerious, unleſs they could depend on being ſupported by the yeomanry of the country. By freely aſſociating and converſing with many of every claſs and denomination, they found them unanimous in that fundamental principle of the American controverſy, "That the Parliament of Great Britain had no right to tax them." From their general determination on this ſubject, a favourable prognoſtic was formed of a ſuccefsful oppoſition to the claims of Great Britain.

In Virginia the Houſe of Burgeſſes, on the 26th of May, 1774, reſolved, that the firſt of June, the day on which the

the operation of the Boſton port bill was to commence, ſhould be ſet apart by the members as a day of faſting, humiliation, and prayer, "devoutly to implore the Divine interpoſition, for averting the heavy calamities which threatened deſtruction to their civil rights, and the evils of a civil war—to give them one heart and one mind, to oppoſe by all juſt and proper means, every injury to American rights." On the publication of this reſolution, the royal Governor, the Earl of Dunmore, diſſolved them. The members, notwithſtanding their diſſolution, met in their private capacities, and ſigned an agreement, in which, among other things, they declared, "that an attack made on one of their ſiſter Colonies, to compel ſubmiſſion to arbitrary taxes, was an attack made on all Britiſh America, and threatened ruin to the rights of all, unleſs the united wiſdom of the whole be applied."

In South-Carolina the vote of the town of Boſton of the 13th of May being preſented to a number of the leading citizens in Charleſtown, it was unanimouſly agreed to call a meeting of the inhabitants.

That this might be as general as poſſible, letters were ſent to every pariſh and diſtrict in the province, and the people were invited to attend, either perſonally, or by their repreſentatives, at a general meeting of the inhabitants. A large number aſſembled, in which were ſome from almoſt every part of the province. The proceedings of the Parliament againſt the province of Maſſachuſetts were diſtinctly related to this convention. Without one diſſenting voice, they paſſed ſundry reſolutions, expreſſive of their rights, and of their ſympathy with the people of Boſton. They alſo choſe five delegates to repreſent them in a continental Congreſs, and inveſted them "with full powers and authority in behalf of them and their conſtituents, to concert, agree to, and effectually to proſecute ſuch legal meaſures as in their opinion, and the opinion of the other members, would be moſt likely to obtain a redreſs of American grievances."

July 18, 1774.

The events of this time may be tranſmitted to poſterity, but the agitation of the public mind can never be fully comprehended but by thoſe who were witneſſes of it.

In

In the counties and towns of the ſeveral provinces, as well as in the cities, the people aſſembled and paſſed reſolutions, expreſſive of their rights, and of their deteſtation of the late American acts of Parliament. Theſe had an inſtantaneous effect on the minds of thouſands. Not only the young and impetuous, but the aged and temperate, joined in pronouncing them to be unconſtitutional and oppreſſive. They viewed them as deadly weapons aimed at the vitals of that liberty which they adored; as rendering abortive the generous pains taken by their forefathers, to procure for them in a new world, the quiet enjoyment of their rights. They were the ſubjects of their meditation when alone, and of their converſation when in company.

Within little more than a month after the news of the Boſton port bill reached America, it was communicated from ſtate to ſtate, and a flame was kindled in almoſt every breaſt through the widely-extended provinces.

In order to underſtand the mode by which this flame was ſpread with ſuch rapidity over ſo great an extent of country, it is neceſſary to obſerve, that the ſeveral Colonies were divided into counties, and theſe again ſubdivided into diſtricts, diſtinguiſhed by the names of towns, townſhips, precincts, hundreds, or pariſhes. In New-England the ſub-diviſions which are called towns, were by law, bodies corporate—had their regular meetings, and might be occaſionally convened by their proper officers. The advantages derived from theſe meetings, by uniting the whole body of the people in the meaſures taken to oppoſe the ſtamp act, induced other provinces to follow the example. Accordingly, under the aſſociation which was formed to oppoſe the revenue act of 1767, committees were eſtabliſhed not only in the capitals of every province, but alſo in moſt of the ſubordinate diſtricts. Great Britain, without deſigning it, had, by her two preceding attempts at American revenue, taught her Colonies not only the advantages, but the means of union. The ſyſtem of committees, which prevailed in 1765, and alſo in 1767, was revived in 1774. By them there was a quick tranſmiſſion of intelligence from the capital towns through the

the subordinate districts to the whole body of the people, and an union of counsels and measures was effected among widely-disseminated inhabitants.

It is perhaps impossible for human wisdom to contrive any system more subservient to these purposes, than such a reciprocal exchange of intelligence by committees. From the want of such communication with each other, and consequently of union among themselves, many states have lost their liberties, and more have been unsuccessful in their attempts to regain them, after they have been lost.

What the eloquence and talents of Demosthenes could not effect among the states of Greece, might have been effected by the simple device of committees of correspondence. The few have been enabled to keep the many in subjection in every age, from the want of union among the latter. Several of the provinces of Spain complained of oppression under Charles the Fifth, and in transports of rage took arms against him; but they never consulted or communicated with each other. They resisted separately, and were therefore separately subdued.

The Colonists sympathising with their distressed brethren in Massachusetts, felt themselves called upon to do something for their relief; but to determine on what was proper to be done, did not so obviously occur. It was a natural idea, that for harmonizing their measures, a Congress of deputies from each province should be convened. This early occurred to all, and being agreed to by all, was the means of procuring union and concert among inhabitants, removed several hundred miles from each other. In times less animated, various questions about the place and legality of their meeting, and about the extent of their power, would have procured a great diversity of sentiments; but on this occasion, by the special agency of Providence, there was the same universal bent of inclination in the great body of the people. A sense of common danger extinguished selfish passions. The public attention was fixed on the great cause of liberty. Local attachments and partialities were sacrificed on the altar of patriotism.

There

There were not wanting moderate men who would have been willing to pay for the tea deſtroyed, if that would have put an end to the controverſy, for it was not the value of the tea nor of the tax, but the indefeaſible right of giving and granting their money, for which the Coloniſts contended. The act of Parliament was ſo cautiouſly worded, as to prevent the opening of the port of Boſton, even though the Eaſt India Company had been reimburſed for all damages, "until it was made appear to his Majeſty in council, that peace and obedience to the laws were ſo far reſtored in the town of Boſton, that the trade of Great Britain might be ſafely carried on there, and his Majeſty's cuſtoms duly collected." The latter part of this limitation, "the due collection of his Majeſty's cuſtoms," was underſtood to comprehend ſubmiſſion to the late revenue laws. It was therefore inferred, that payment for the tea deſtroyed would produce no certain relief, unleſs they were willing to give operation to the law, for raiſing a revenue on future importations of that commodity, and alſo to acquieſce in the late mutilation of their charter. As it was deliberately reſolved, never to ſubmit to either, the moſt lukewarm of well-informed patriots, poſſeſſing the public confidence, neither adviſed nor wiſhed for the adoption of that meaſure. A few in Boſton, who were known to be in the royal intereſt, propoſed a reſolution for that purpoſe, but they met with no ſupport. Of the many who joined the Britiſh in the courſe of the war, there was ſcarcely an individual to be found in this early ſtage of the controverſy, who advocated the rights of parliamentary taxation. There was, doubtleſs, many timid perſons, who fearing the power of Britain, would rather have ſubmitted to her incroachments, than riſque the vengeance of her arms, but ſuch for the moſt part ſuppreſſed their ſentiments. Zeal for liberty, being immediately rewarded with applauſe, the patriots had every inducement to come forward, and avow their principles; but there was ſomething ſo unpopular in appearing to be influenced by timidity, intereſt, or exceſſive caution, when eſſential intereſts were attacked, that ſuch perſons ſhunned public notice, and ſought the ſhade of retirement.

In

In the three first months which followed the ſhutting up of the port of Boſton, the inhabitants of the Colonies in hundreds of ſmall circles, as well as in their provincial Aſſemblies and Congreſſes, expreſſed their abhorrence of the late proceedings of the Britiſh Parliament againſt Maſſachuſetts—their concurrence in the propoſed meaſure of appointing deputies for a general Congreſs, and their willingneſs to do and ſuffer whatever ſhould be judged conducive to the eſtabliſhment of their liberties.

A patriotic flame, created and diffuſed by the contagion of ſympathy, was communicated to ſo many breaſts, and reflected from ſuch a variety of objects, as to become too intenſe to be reſiſted.

While the combination of the other Colonies to ſupport Boſton was gaining ſtrength, new matter of diſſention daily took place in Maſſachuſetts. The reſolution for ſhutting the port of Boſton was no ſooner taken, than it was determined to order a military force to that town. General Gage, the commander in chief of the royal forces in North America, was alſo ſent thither, in the additional capacity of Governor of Maſſachuſetts. He arrived in Boſton on the third day after the inhabitants received the firſt intelligence of the Boſton port bill. Though the people were irritated by that meaſure, and though their republican jealouſy was hurt by the combination of the civil and military character in one perſon, yet the General was received with all the honours which had been uſually paid to his predeceſſors. Soon after his arrival, two regiments of foot, with a detachment of artillery and ſome cannon, were landed in Boſton. Theſe troops were by degrees re-inforced with others from Ireland, New-York, Halifax, and Quebec.

The Governor announced that he had the King's particular command for holding the general court at Salem, after the firſt of June. When that eventful day arrived, the act for ſhutting up the port of Boſton commenced its operation. It was devoutly kept at Williamſbourgh, as a day of faſting and humiliation. In Philadelphia it was ſolemnized with every manifeſtation of public calamity and grief. The inhabitants ſhut up their houſes. After divine

divine ſervice a ſtillneſs reigned over the city, which exhibited an appearance of the deepeſt diſtreſs.

In Boſton a new ſcene opened on the inhabitants. Hitherto that town had been the ſeat of commerce and of plenty. The immenſe buſineſs carried on therein afforded a comfortable ſubſiſtence to many thouſands. The neceſſary, the uſeful, and even ſome of the elegant arts were cultivated among them. The citizens were polite and hoſpitable. In this happy ſtate they were ſentenced on the ſhort notice of twenty one days, to a total deprivation of all means of ſubſiſting. The blow reached every perſon. The rents of the landholders either ceaſed or were greatly diminiſhed. The immenſe property in ſtores and wharfs was rendered comparatively uſeleſs. Labourers, artificers, and others, employed in the numerous occupations created by an extenſive trade, partook in the general calamity. They who depended on a regular income, flowing from previous acquiſitions of property, as well as they who with the ſweat of their brow earned their daily ſubſiſtence, were equally deprived of the means of ſupport; and the chief difference between them was, that the diſtreſſes of the former were rendered more intolerable by the recollection of paſt enjoyments. All theſe inconveniencies and hardſhips were borne with a paſſing, but inflexible fortitude. Their determination to perſiſt in the ſame line of conduct which had been the occaſion of their ſuffering was unabated.

The authors and adviſers of the reſolution for deſtroying the tea were in the town, and ſtill retained their popularity and influence. The execrations of the inhabitants fell not on them, but on the Britiſh Parliament. Their countrymen acquitted them of all ſelfiſh deſigns, and believed that, in their oppoſition to the meaſures of Great Britain, they were actuated by an honeſt zeal for conſtitutional liberty. The ſufferers in Boſton had the conſolation of ſympathy from the other Coloniſts. Contributions were raiſed in all quarters for their relief. Letters and addreſſes came to them from corporate bodies, town meetings, and provincial conventions, applauding their conduct, and exhorting them to perſeverance.

The

The people of Marblehead, who by their proximity were likely to reap advantage from the diſtreſſes of Boſton, generouſly offered the merchants thereof, the uſe of their harbour, wharfs, warehouſes, and alſo their perſonal attendance on the lading or unlading of their goods, free of all expence.

The inhabitants of Salem in an addreſs to Governor Gage, concluded with theſe remarkable words, "By ſhutting up the port of Boſton, ſome imagine that the courſe of trade might be turned hither, and to our benefit: but nature in the formation of our harbour, forbids our becoming rivals in commerce with that convenient mart; and were it otherwiſe, we muſt be dead to every idea of juſtice, loſt to all feelings of humanity, could we indulge one thought to ſeize on wealth, and raiſe our fortunes on the ruins of our ſuffering neighbours."

The Maſſachuſetts general court met at Salem, according to adjournment, on the 7th of June. Several of the popular leaders took, in a private way, the ſenſe of the members on what was proper to be done. Finding they were able to carry ſuch meaſures as the public exigencies required, they prepared reſolves, and moved for their adoption. But before they went on the latter buſineſs, their door was ſhut.

One member, nevertheleſs, contrived means of ſending information to Governor Gage of what was doing. His ſecretary was ſent off to diſſolve the general court, but was refuſed admiſſion. As he could obtain no entrance, he read the proclamation at the door, and immediately after in council, and thus diſſolved the general court, The houſe, while ſitting with their doors ſhut, appointed five of the moſt reſpectable inhabitants as their committee, to meet committees from other Provinces, that might be convened the firſt of September at Philadelphia—voted them 75 pounds ſterling each, and recommended to the ſeveral towns and diſtricts to raiſe the ſaid ſum by equitable proportions. By theſe means the deſigns of the Governor were diſappointed. His ſituation in every reſpect was truly diſagreeable. It was his duty to forward the execution of laws which were univerſally execrated.

Zeal

Zeal for his maſter's ſervice prompted him to endeavour that they ſhould be carried into full effect, but his progreſs was retarded by obſtacles from every quarter. He had to tranſact his official buſineſs with a people who poſſeſſed a high ſenſe of liberty, and were uncommonly ingenious in evading diſagreeable acts of Parliament. It was a part of his duty to prevent the calling of the town meetings after the firſt of Auguſt 1774. Theſe meetings were nevertheleſs held. On his propoſing to exert authority for the diſperſion of the people, he was told by the ſelect men, that they had not offended againſt the act of Parliament, for that only prohibited the calling of town meetings, and that no ſuch call had been made: a former conſtitutional meeting, before the firſt of Auguſt, having only adjourned themſelves from time to time. Other evaſions equally founded on the letter of even the late obnoxious laws were practiſed.

As the ſummer advanced, the people of Maſſachuſetts received ſtronger proofs of ſupport from the neighbouring provinces; they were therefore encouraged to farther oppoſition. The inhabitants of the Colonies at this time, with regard to political opinions, might be divided into three claſſes; of theſe, one was for ruſhing precipitately into extremities. They were for immediately ſtopping all trade, and could not even brook the delay of waiting till the propoſed continental Congreſs ſhould meet. Another party, equally reſpectable, both as to character, property, and patriotiſm, was more moderate, but not leſs firm. Theſe were averſe to the adoption of any violent reſolutions till all others were ineffectually tried. They wiſhed that a clear ſtatement of their rights, claims, and grievances, ſhould precede every other meaſure. A third claſs diſapproved of what was generally going on. A few from principle, and a perſuaſion that they ought to ſubmit to the Mother Country; ſome from the love of eaſe, others from ſelf-intereſt, but the bulk from fear of the miſchievous conſequences likely to follow. All theſe latter claſſes, for the moſt part, lay ſtill, while the friends of liberty acted with ſpirit. If they, or any of them, ventured to oppoſe popular meaſures, they

were

were not ſupported, and therefore declined farther efforts. The reſentment of the people was ſo ſtrong againſt them, that they ſought for peace by remaining quiet. The ſame indeciſion that made them willing to ſubmit to Great Britain, made them apparently acquieſce in popular meaſures which they diſapproved. The ſpirited part of the community being on the ſide of liberty, the patriots had the appearance of unanimity; though many either kept at a diſtance from public meetings, or voted againſt their own opinion, to ſecure themſelves from reſentment, and promote their preſent eaſe and intereſt.

Under the influence of thoſe who were for the immediate adoption of efficacious meaſures, an agreement by the name of the ſolemn league and covenant was adopted by numbers. The ſubſcribers of this bound themſelves to ſuſpend all commercial intercourſe with Great Britain, until the late obnoxious laws were repealed, and the Colony of Maſſachuſetts reſtored to its chartered rights.

June 29. General Gage publiſhed a proclamation, in which he ſtiled this ſolemn league and covenant, "An unlawful, hoſtile, and traiterous combination." And all magiſtrates were charged to apprehend and ſecure for trial, ſuch as ſhould have any agency in publiſhing or ſubſcribing the ſame, or any ſimilar covenant. This proclamation had no other effect than to exerciſe the pens of the lawyers, in ſhewing that the aſſociation did not come within the deſcription of legal treaſon, and that, therefore, the Governor's proclamation was not warranted by the principles of the conſtitution.

The late law for regulating the government of the provinces, arrived near the beginning of Auguſt, and was accompanied with a liſt of 36 new counſellors, appointed by the Crown, and in a mode variant from that preſcribed by the charter. Several of theſe in the firſt inſtance, declined an acceptance of the appointment. Thoſe who accepted of it, were every where declared to be enemies to their country. The new judges were rendered incapable of proceeding in their official duty. Upon opening the courts, the juries refuſed to be ſworn, or to act in any manner, either under them, or in conformity to the late regula-

regulations. In ſome places, the people aſſembled and filled the court-houſes and avenues to them in ſuch a manner, that neither the judges, nor their officers could obtain entrance; and upon the ſheriff's commanding them to make way for the court, they anſwered, "That they knew no court independent of the ancient laws of their country, and to none other would they ſubmit."

In imitation of his royal maſter, Governor Gage iſſued a proclamation "for the encouragement of piety and virtue, and for the prevention and puniſhing vice, prophaneſs, and immortality." In this proclamation, hypocriſy was inſerted as one of the immoralities againſt which the people were warned. This was conſidered by the inhabitants, who had often been ridiculed for their ſtrict attention to the forms of religion, to be a ſtudied inſult, and as ſuch was more reſented than an actual injury. It greatly added to the inflammation which had already taken place in their minds. Aug. 4.

The proceedings and apparent diſpoſitions of the people, together with the military preparations which were daily made through the province, induced General Gage to fortify that neck of land which joins Boſton to the Continent.

He alſo ſeized upon the powder which was lodged in the arſenal at Charleſtown.

This excited a moſt violent and univerſal ferment. Several thouſands of the people aſſembled at Cambridge, and it was with difficulty they were reſtrained from marching directly to Boſton, to demand a delivery of the powder, with a reſolution in caſe of refuſal to attack the troops. Sept. 1.

The people thus aſſembled, proceeded to Lieutenant Governor Oliver's houſe, and to the houſes of ſeveral of the new counſellors, and obliged them to reſign, and to declare that they would no more act under the laws lately enacted. In the confuſion of theſe tranſactions, a rumour went abroad that the royal fleet and troops were firing upon the town of Boſton. This was probably deſigned by the popular leaders, on purpoſe to aſcertain what aid they might expect from the country in caſe of extremities. The reſult exceeded their moſt ſanguine expectations,

pectations. In lefs than twenty-four hours, there were upwards of 30,000 men in arms, and marching towards the capital. Other rifings of the people took place in different parts of the Colony, and their violence was fuch, that in a fhort time the new counfellors, the commiffioners of the cuftoms, and all who had taken an active part in favour of Great-Britain, were obliged to fkreen themfelves in Bofton. The new feat of government at Salem was abandoned, and all the officers connected with the revenue were obliged to confult their fafety, by taking up their refidence in a place which an act of Parliament had profcribed from all trade.

About this time, delegates from every town and diftrict in the county of Suffolk, of which Bofton is the county town, had a meeting, at which they prefaced a number of fpirited refolutions, containing a detail of the particulars of their intended oppofition to the late acts of Parliament, with a general declaration, "That no obedience was due from the province to either, or any part of the faid acts, but that they fhould be rejected as the attempts of a wicked adminiftration to enflave America." The refolves of this meeting were fent on to Philadelphia for the information and opinion of the Congrefs, which, as fhall be hereafter related, had met there about this time.

The people of Maffachufetts rightly judged, that from the decifion of Congrefs on thefe refolutions, they would be enabled to determine what fupport they might expect. Notwithftanding prefent appearances, they feared that the other Colonies, who were no more than remotely concerned, would not hazard the confequences of making a common caufe with them, fhould fubfequent events make it neceffary to repel force by force. The decifion of Congrefs exceeded their expectations. They "moft thoroughly approved the wifdom and fortitude with which oppofition to wicked minifterial meafures had been hitherto conducted in Maffachufetts, and recommended to them perfeverance in the fame firm and temperate conduct as expreffed in the refolutions of the delegates from the county of Svffolk." By this approbation and advice, the people

people of Maſſachuſetts were encouraged to reſiſtance, and the other Colonies became bound to ſupport them. The former, more in need of a bridle than a ſpur, proceeded as they had begun, but with additional confidence. 1774.

Governor Gage had iſſued writs for holding a general aſſembly at Salem; but ſubſequent events, and the heat and violence which every where prevailed, made him think it expedient to counteract the writs by a proclamation for ſuſpending the meeting of the members. The legality of a proclamation for that purpoſe was denied, and in defiance thereof ninety of the newly-elected members met at the time and place appointed. They ſoon after reſolved themſelves into a Provincial Congreſs, and adjourned to Concord, about twenty miles from Charleſtown. On their meeting there, they choſe Mr. Hancock preſident, and proceeded to buſineſs. One of their firſt acts was to appoint a committee to wait on the Governor with a remonſtrance, in which they apologized for their meeting, from the diſtreſſed ſtate of the Colony;—complained of their grievances, and, after ſtating their apprehenſions, from the hoſtile preparations on Boſton Neck, concluded with an earneſt requeſt, "That he would deſiſt from the conſtruction of the fortreſs at the entrance into Boſton, and reſtore that paſs to its natural ſtate." The Governor found ſome difficulty in giving them an anſwer, as they were not, in his opinion, a legal body, but the neceſſity of the times over-ruled his ſcruples. He replied, by expreſſing his indignation at the ſuppoſition, "That the lives, liberties, or property of any people, except enemies, could be in danger from Engliſh troops." He reminded them, that while they complained of alterations made in their charter, by acts of Parliament, they were by their own acts ſubverting it altogether. He, therefore, warned them of the rocks they were upon, and to deſiſt from ſuch illegal and unconſtitutional proceedings. The Governor's admonitions were unavailing. The Provincial Congreſs appointed a committee to draw up a plan for the immediate defence of the province. It was reſolved to inliſt a number of the inhabitants under the name of minute men, who were to be under obligations to turn out at a Oct. 4.

1774. minute's warning. Jedediah Pribble, Artemas Ward, and Seth Pomeroy, were elected general officers to command those minute men and the militia, in case they should be called out to action. A committee of safety and a committee of supplies were appointed. These consisted of different persons, and were intended for different purposes. The first were invested with an authority to assemble the militia when they thought proper, and were to recommend to the committee of supplies the purchase of such articles as the public exigencies required;—the last were limitted to the small sum of 15,627*l.* 15*s.* sterling, which was all the money at first voted to oppose the power and riches of Great Britain. Under this authority, and with these means, the committee of safety and of supplies, acting in concert, laid in a quantity of stores, partly at
Nov. 23. Worcester and partly at Concord.—The same Congress met again, and soon after resolved to get in readiness twelve thousand men to act on any given emergency; and that a fourth part of the militia should be enlisted as minute men, and receive pay. John Thomas and William Heath were appointed general officers. They also sent persons to New-Hampshire, Rhode-Island, and Connecticut, to inform them of the steps they had taken, and to request their co-operation in making up an army of 20,000 men. Committees from these several Colonies met with a committee from the Provincial Congress of Massachusetts, and settled their plans. The proper period of commencing opposition to General Gage's troops, was determined to be whenever they marched out with their baggage, ammunition, and artillery. The aid of the clergy was called in upon this occasion, and a circular letter was addressed to each of the several ministers in the province, requesting their assistance "in avoiding the dreadful slavery with which they were threatened."

As the winter approached, General Gage ordered barracks for his troops to be erected, but such was the superior influence of the popular leaders, that on their recommendation the workmen desisted from fulfilling the General's wishes, though the money for their labour would have been paid by the Crown.

An application to New-York was equally unsuccess-

 ful,

ful, and it was with difficulty that the troops could be 1774.
furnifhed with winter lodgings.—Similar obftructions
were thrown in the way of getting winter covering for
the foldiery. The merchants of New-York on being applied to, anfwered, "That they would never fupply any article for the benefit of men who were fent as enemies to the country." The inhabitants of Maffachufetts encouraged the defertion of the foldiers; and acted fyftematically in preventing their obtaining any other fupplies but neceffary provifions. The farmers were difcouraged from felling them ftraw, timber, boards, and fuch like articles of convenience. Straw, when purchafed for their fervice, was frequently burnt. Veffels, with bricks intended for their ufe, were funk, and carts with wood were overturned, and the King's property, by one contrivance or other, was daily deftroyed.

A proclamation had been iffued by the King, prohibiting the exportation of military ftores from Britain, which reached America in the latter end of the year 1774. On receiving intelligence thereof, in Rhode-Ifland, the people feized upon and removed from the public battery about forty pieces of cannon; and the affembly paffed refolutions for obtaining arms and military ftores by every means, and alfo for raifing and arming the inhabitants: foon after
400 men befet his Majefty's caftle at Portfmouth. They Dec. 14.
fuftained a fire from three four-pounders and fmall arms, but before they could be ready for a fecond fire, the affailants ftormed the fort, and fecured and confined the garrifon till they broke open the powder houfe, and took the powder away.—The powder being fecured, the garrifon was releafed from confinement.

Throughout this whole feafon, civil government, legiflation, judicial proceedings, and commercial regulations, were in Maffachufetts, to all appearance, annihilated. The Provincial Congrefs exercifed all the femblance of government which exifted. From their coincidence with the prevailing difpofition of the people, their refolutions had the weight and efficacy of laws. Under the fimple ftile of recommendation, they organized the militia, made ordinances refpecting public monies, and fuch farther regu-

 lations

1774. lations as were neceſſary for preſerving order, and for defending themſelves againſt the Britiſh troops.

In this criſis it ſeemed to be the ſenſe of the inhabitants of Maſſachuſetts to wait events. They dreaded every evil that could flow from reſiſtance, leſs than the operation of the late acts of Parliament, but at the ſame time were averſe to be the aggreſſors in bringing on a civil war. They choſe to ſubmit to a ſuſpenſion of regular government, in preference to permitting the ſtreams of juſtice to flow in the channel preſcribed by the late acts of Parliament, or to conducting them forcibly in the old one, ſanctioned by their charter. From the extinction of the old, and the rejection of the new conſtitution, all regular government was for ſeveral months aboliſhed. Some hundred thouſands of people were in a ſtate of nature without legiſlation, magiſtrates, or executive officers: there was nevertheleſs a ſurpriſing degree of order. Men of the pureſt morals were among the moſt active oppoſers of Great Britain. While municipal laws ceaſed to operate, the laws of reaſon, morality, and religion, bound the people to each other as a ſocial band, and preſerved as great a degree of decorum as had at any time prevailed. Even thoſe who were oppoſed to the proceedings of the populace when they were prudent and moderate, for the moſt part enjoyed ſafety both at home and abroad.

Though there were no civil officers, there was an abundance of military ones. Theſe were choſen by the people, but exerciſed more authority than any who had been honoured with commiſſions from the Governor. The inhabitants of every place devoted themſelves to arms. Handling the muſket, and training, were the faſhionable amuſements of the men, while the women by their preſence encouraged them to proceed. The ſound of drums and fifes was to be heard in all directions. The young and the old were fired with a martial ſpirit. On experiment it was found, that to force on the inhabitants a form of government to which they were totally averſe, was not within the fancied omnipotence of Parliament.

During theſe tranſactions in Maſſachuſetts effectual meaſures

measures had been taken by the Colonies for convening a Continental Congress. Though there was no one entitled to lead in this business, yet in consequence of the general impulse on the public mind, from a sense of common danger, not only the measure itself, but the time and place of meeting, were with surprising unanimity agreed upon. The Colonies, though formerly agitated with local prejudices, jealousies, and aversions, were led to assemble together in a general diet, and to feel their weight and importance in a common union. Within four months from the day on which the first intelligence of the Boston port bill reached America, the deputies of eleven provinces had convened in Philadelphia, and in four days more, by the arrival of delegates from North-Carolina, there was a complete representation of twelve Colonies, containing three millions of people, disseminated over 260,000 square miles of territory. Some of the delegates were appointed by the constitutional assemblies in other provinces; where they were embarrassed by royal governors, the appointments were made in voluntary meetings of the people. Perhaps there never was a body of delegates more faithful to the interest of their constituents than the Congress of 1774. The public voice elevated none to a seat in that august assembly, but such as in addition to considerable abilities, possessed that ascendancy over the minds of their fellow-citizens, which can neither be acquired by birth nor purchased by wealth. The instructions given to these deputies were various, but in general they contained strong professions of loyalty, and of constitutional dependence on the Mother Country.—The framers of them acknowledged the prerogatives of the Crown, and disclaimed every wish of separation from the Parent State. On the other hand, they were firm in declaring that they were entitled to all the rights of British born subjects, and that the late acts respecting Massachusetts were unconstitutional and oppressive. 1774.

They particularly stated their grievances, and for the most part concurred in authorising their deputies to concert and agree to such measures in behalf of their constituents,

1774. ſtituents, as in their joint opinion would be moſt likely to obtain a redreſs of American grievances, aſcertain American right, on conſtitutional principles, and eſtabliſh union and harmony between Great Britain and the Colonies. Of the various inſtructions on this occaſion, thoſe which were drawn up by a convention of delegates from every county in the province of Pennſylvania, and preſented by them in a body to the conſtitutional aſſembly, were the moſt preciſe and determinate. By theſe it appears, that the Pennſylvanians were diſpoſed to ſubmit to the acts of navigation, as they then ſtood, and alſo to ſettle a certain annual revenue on his Majeſty, his heirs and ſucceſſors, ſubject to the control of Parliament, and to ſatisfy all damages done to the Eaſt India Company, provided their grievances were redreſſed, and an amicable compact was ſettled, which, by eſtabliſhing American rights in the manner of a new Magna Charta, would have precluded future diſputes.

Of the whole number of deputies which formed the Continental Congreſs of 1774, one half were lawyers. Gentlemen of that profeſſion had acquired the confidence of the inhabitants by their exertions in the common cauſe. The previous meaſures in the reſpective provinces had been planned and carried into effect, more by lawyers than by any other order of men. Profeſſionally taught the rights of the people, they were among the foremoſt to deſcry every attack made on their liberties. Bred in the habits of public ſpeaking, they made a diſtinguiſhed figure in the meetings of the people, and were particularly able to explain to them the tendency of the late acts of Parliament. Exerting their abilities and influence in the cauſe of their country, they were rewarded with its confidence.

On the meeting of Congreſs, they choſe Peyton Randolph their preſident, and Charles Thomſon their ſecretary. They agreed, as one of the rules of their doing buſineſs, that no entry ſhould be made on their journals of any propoſitions diſcuſſed before them, to which they did not finally aſſent.

This auguſt body, to which all the Colonies looked up for

for wiſdom and direction, had ſcarcely convened, when a dispute aroſe about the mode of conducting buſineſs, which alarmed the friends of union. It was contended by ſome, that the votes of the ſmall provinces ſhould not count as much as thoſe of the larger ones. This was argued with ſome warmth, and invidious compariſons were made between the extenſive dominion of Virginia, and the ſmall Colonies of Delaware and Rhode-Iſland. The impoſſibility of fixing the comparative weight of each province, from the want of proper materials, induced Congreſs to reſolve, that each ſhould have one equal vote. The mode of conducting buſineſs being ſettled, two committees were appointed: one, to ſtate the rights of the Colonies, the ſeveral inſtances in which theſe rights had been violated, and the means moſt proper to be purſued for obtaining a reſtoration of them; the other, to examine and report the ſeveral ſtatutes which affected the trade and manufactures of the Colonies. The firſt committee were farther inſtructed to confine themſelves to the conſideration of ſuch rights as had been infringed ſince the year 1763. 1774.

Congreſs, ſoon after their meeting, agreed upon a declaration of their rights, by which it was among other things declared, that the inhabitants of the Engliſh Colonies in North-America, by the immutable laws of nature,—the principles of the Engliſh conſtitution, and the ſeveral charters or compacts, were entitled to life, liberty, and property; and that they had never ceded to any ſovereign power whatever, a right to diſpoſe of either, without their conſent. That their anceſtors, who firſt ſettled the Colonies, were entitled to all the rights, liberties, and immunities of free and natural born ſubjects within the realm of England, and that by their migrating to America, they by no means forfeited, ſurrendered, or loſt any of thoſe rights;—that the foundation of Engliſh liberty, and of all free government was, a right in the people to participate in their legiſlative council, and that as the Engliſh Coloniſts were not, and could not be properly repreſented in the Britiſh Parliament, they were entitled to a free and excluſive power of legiſlation in their

 ſeveral

1774. ſeveral provincial legiſlatures, in all caſes of taxation and internal polity, ſubject only to the negative of their ſovereign. They then run the line between the ſupremacy of Parliament, and the independency of the colonial legiſlatures by proviſoes and reſtrictions, expreſſed in the following words: "But from the neceſſity of the caſe, and a regard to the mutual intereſts of both countries, we cheerfully conſent to the operation of ſuch acts of the Britiſh Parliament, as are *bona fide* reſtrained to the regulation of our external commerce, for the purpoſe of ſecuring the commercial advantages of the whole empire to the Mother Country, and the commercial benefits of its reſpective members, excluding every idea of taxation, internal and external, for raiſing a revenue on the ſubjects in America without their conſent."

This was the very hinge of the controverſy. The abſolute unlimited ſupremacy of the Britiſh Parliament, both in legiſlation and taxation, was contended for on one ſide; while on the other, no farther authority was conceded than ſuch a limited legiſlation, with regard to external commerce, as would combine the intereſt of the whole empire. In government, as well as in religion, there are myſteries from the cloſe inveſtigation of which little advantage can be expected. From the unity of the empire it was neceſſary, that ſome acts ſhould extend over the whole. From the local ſituation of the Colonies it was equally reaſonable that their legiſlatures ſhould at leaſt in ſome matters be independent. Where the ſupremacy of the firſt ended and the independency of the laſt began, was to the beſt informed a puzzling queſtion. Happy would it have been for both countries, had the diſcuſſion of this doubtful point never been attempted.

Congreſs alſo reſolved, that the Coloniſts were entitled to the common law of England, and more eſpecially to the privilege of being tried by their peers of the vicinage. That they were entitled to the benefit of ſuch of the Engliſh ſtatutes as exiſted at the time of their colonization, and which they had found to be applicable to their local circumſtances, and alſo to the immunities and privileges granted and confirmed to them by royal charters, or ſecured

cured by provincial laws. That they had a right peaceably to assemble, consider of their grievances, and petition the King; that the keeping a standing army in the Colonies, without the consent of the legislature of the Colony where the army was kept, was against law. That it was indispensibly necessary to good government, and rendered essential by the English constitution, that the constituent branches of the legislature be independent of each other, and that therefore the exercise of legislative power, in several Colonies, by a council appointed during pleasure by the Crown, was unconstitutional, dangerous and destructive to the freedom of American legislation. And of these liberties, Congress in behalf of themselves and their constituents, claimed, demanded, and insisted upon as their indubitable rights, which could not be legally taken from them, altered, or abridged by any power whatever without their consent. Congress then resolved, that sundry acts which had been passed in the reign of George the Third, were infringements and violations of the rights of the Colonists, and that the repeal of them was essentially necessary, in order to restore harmony between Great Britain and the Colonies. The acts complained of were as follows: the several acts of 4 George III. ch. 15, and ch. 34—5. George III. ch. 25—6. George III. ch. 52—7. George III. ch. 41. and ch. 46—8. George III. ch. 22. which imposed duties for the purpose of raising a revenue in America,—extended the power of the admiralty courts beyond their ancient limits,—deprived the American subject of trial by jury,—authorized the judges certificate to indemnify the prosecutor from damages, that he might otherwise be liable to require oppressive security from a claimant of ships and goods seized before he was allowed to defend his property.

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Also 12 George III. ch. 24. entitled, "An act for the better securing his Majesty's dock yards, magazines, ships, ammunition, and stores," which declares a new offence in America, and deprives the American subjects of a constitutional trial by jury of the vicinage, by authorizing the trial of any person charged with the committing any offence described in the said act out of the realm, to be indicted

1774. dicted and tried for the same in any shire or county within the realm.

Also the three acts passed in the last sessions of Parliament for stopping the port and blocking up the harbour of Boston, for altering the charter and government of Massachusetts Bay, and that which is entitled, "An act for the better administration of justice, &c."

Also the act passed in the same session, for establishing the Roman Catholic religion in the province of Quebec, abolishing the equitable system of English laws, and erecting a tyranny there to the great danger (from so total a dissimilarity of religion, law, and government) of the neighbouring British Colonies, by the assistance of whose blood and treasure the said country had been conquered from France.

Also the act passed in the same session, for the better providing suitable quarters for officers and soldiers in his Majesty's service in North America.

Also the keeping a standing army in several of these Colonies in time of peace, without the consent of the legislature of that Colony in which such army was kept, was affirmed to be against law.

Congress declared, that they could not submit to these grievous acts and measures. In hopes that their fellow subjects in Great Britain would restore the Colonies to that state in which both countries found happiness and prosperity, they resolved for the present only to pursue the following peaceable measures: 1st, To enter into a non-importation, non-consumption, and non-exportation agreement or association; 2d, To prepare an address to the people of Great Britain, and a memorial to the inhabitants of British America; and 3dly, to prepare a loyal address to his Majesty.

By the association they bound themselves and their constituents, "from and after the 1st day of December next, not to import into British America, from Great Britain or Ireland, any goods, wares, or merchandize, whatsoever;—not to purchase any slave, imported after the said first day of December;—not to purchase or use any tea, imported on account of the East India Company, or any

any on which a duty hath been or ſhall be paid; and from and after the firſt day of the next enſuing March, neither to purchaſe or uſe any Eaſt India tea whatever. That they would not after the tenth day of the next September, if their grievances were not previouſly redreſſed, export any commodity whatſoever to Great Britain, Ireland, or the Weſt Indies, except rice to Europe. That the merchants ſhould, as ſoon as poſſible, write to their correſpondents in Great Britain and Ireland, not to ſhip any goods to them on any pretence whatever; and if any merchant there ſhould ſhip any goods for America, in order to contravene the non-importation agreement, they would not afterwards have any commercial connection with ſuch merchant; that ſuch as were owners of veſſels, ſhould give poſitive orders to their captains and maſters, not to receive on board their veſſels any goods prohibited by the ſaid non-importation agreement; that they would uſe their endeavours to improve the breed of ſheep, and increaſe their numbers to the greateſt extent; that they would encourage frugality, œconomy, and induſtry, and promote agriculture, arts, and American manufactures; they would diſcountenance and diſcourage every ſpecies of extravagance and diſſipation, and that on the death of relations or friends, they would wear no other mourning than a ſmall piece of black crape or ribbon; that ſuch as were venders of goods, ſhould not take any advantage of the ſcarcity ſo as to raiſe their prices; that if any perſon ſhould import goods after the firſt day of December, and before the firſt day of February, then next enſuing, the ſame ought to be immediately re-ſhipped or delivered up to a committee to be ſtored or ſold: in the laſt caſe, all the clear profits to be applied towards the relief of the inhabitants of Boſton; and that if any goods ſhould be imported after the firſt day of February, then next enſuing, they ſhould be ſent back without breaking any of the packages; that committees be choſen in every county, city, and town, to obſerve the conduct of all perſons touching the aſſociation, and to publiſh in Gazettes, the names of the violaters of it, as foes to the rights of Britiſh America; that the committees of correſpondence

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in

1774. in the refpective Colonies frequently infpect the entries of their cuftom houfes, and inform each other from time to time of the true ftate thereof; that all manufactures of America fhould be fold at reafonable prices; and no advantage be taken of a future fcarcity of goods; and laftly, that they would have no dealings or intercourfe whatever, with any province or colony of North America, which fhould not accede to, or fhould violate the aforefaid affociations." Thefe feveral refolutions they bound themfelves and their conftituents by the facred ties of virtue, honour, and love of their country, to obferve till their grievances were redreffed.

In their addrefs to the people of Great Britain they complimented them for having at every hazard maintained their independence, and tranfmitted the rights of man and the bleffings of liberty to their pofterity, and requefted them not to be furprifed, that they who were defcended from the fame common anceftors fhould refufe to furrender their rights, liberties, and conftitution. They proceeded to ftate their rights and their grievances, and to vindicate themfelves from the charge of being feditious, impatient of government, and defirous of independency. They fummed up their wifhes in the following words: "Place us in the fame fituation that we were at the clofe of the laft war, and our former harmony will be reftored."

In the memorial of Congrefs to the inhabitants of the Britifh Colonies, they recapitulated the proceedings of Great Britain againft them fince the year 1763, in order to imprefs them with a belief that a deliberate fyftem was formed for abridging their liberties. They then proceeded to ftate the meafures they had adopted to counteract this fyftem, and gave the reafons which induced them to adopt the fame. They encouraged them to fubmit to the inconveniencies of non-importation and non-exportation, by defiring them "to weigh in the oppofite balance the endlefs miferies they and their defcendants muft endure from an eftablifhed arbitrary power." They concluded with informing them, "that the fchemes agitated againft the Colonies had been fo conducted as to render it prudent

dent to extend their views to mournful events, and to be in all reſpects prepared for every contingency." 1774.

In the petition of Congreſs to the King, they begged leave to lay their grievances before the throne. After a particular enumeration of theſe, they obſerved that they wholly aroſe from a deſtructive ſyſtem of Colony adminiſtration adopted ſince the concluſion of the laſt war. They aſſured his Majeſty that they had made ſuch proviſion for defraying the charges of the adminiſtration of juſtice, and the ſupport of civil government, as had been judged juſt and ſuitable to their reſpective circumſtances; and that for the defence, protection, and ſecurity of the Colonies, their militia would be fully ſufficient in time of peace, and in caſe of war they were ready and willing, when conſtitutionally required, to exert their moſt ſtrenuous efforts in granting ſupplies and raiſing forces. They ſaid, "We aſk but for peace, liberty, and ſafety. We wiſh not a diminution of the prerogative, nor do we ſolicit the grant of any new right in our favour. Your royal authority over us, and our connection with Great Britain, we ſhall always carefully and zealouſly endeavour to ſupport and maintain." They then ſolicited for a redreſs of their grievances, which they had enumerated, and appealing to that Being who ſearches thoroughly the hearts of his creatures, they ſolemnly profeſſed, "that their counſels had been influenced by no other motives than a dread of impending deſtruction." They concluded with imploring his Majeſty, "for the honour of Almighty God, for his own glory, for the intereſt of his family, for the ſafety of his kingdoms and dominions, that as the loving father of his whole people, connected by the ſame bonds of law, loyalty, faith, and blood, though dwelling in various countries, he would not ſuffer the tranſcendent relation formed by theſe ties, to be farther violated by uncertain expectation of effects, that if attained, never could compenſate for the calamities through which they muſt be gained."

The Congreſs alſo addreſſed the French inhabitants of Canada. In this they ſtated the right they had on becoming Engliſh ſubjects, to the benefits of the Engliſh conſtitution

1774. conſtitution. They explained what theſe rights were, and pointed out the difference between the conſtitution impoſed on them by act of Parliament, and that to which as Britiſh ſubjects they were entitled. They introduced their countryman Monteſquieu, as reprobating their parliamentary conſtitution, and exhorting them to join their fellow Coloniſts in ſupport of their common rights. They earneſtly invited them to join with the other Colonies in one ſocial compact, formed on the generous principles of equal liberty, and to this end recommended that they would chuſe delegates to repreſent them in Congreſs.

All theſe addreſſes were written with uncommon ability. Coming from the heart, they were calculated to move it. Inſpired by a love of liberty, and rouſed by a ſenſe of common danger, the patriots of that day ſpoke, wrote, and acted with an animation unknown in times of public tranquillity; but it was not ſo much on the probable effect of theſe addreſſes, that Congreſs founded their hopes of obtaining a redreſs of their grievances, as on the conſequences which they expected from the operation of their non-importation, and non-exportation agreement. The ſucceſs that had followed the adoption of a meaſure ſimilar to the former, in two preceding inſtances, had encouraged the Coloniſts to expect much from a repetition of it. They indulged in extravagant opinions of the importance of their trade to Great Britain. The meaſure of a non-exportation of their commodities was a new expedient, and from that, even more was expected than from the non-importation agreement. They ſuppoſed that it would produce ſuch extenſive diſtreſs among the merchants and manufacturers of Great Britain, and eſpecially among the inhabitants of the Britiſh Weſt India iſlands, as would induce their general co-operation in procuring a redreſs of American grievances. Events proved that young nations, like young people, are prone to over rate their own importance.

October 26. Congreſs having finiſhed all this important buſineſs, in leſs than eight weeks diſſolved themſelves, after giving their opinion, "that another Congreſs ſhould be held on the 10th of May next enſuing at Philadelphia, unleſs the

the redress of their grievances ſhould be previouſly obtained," and recommending "to all the Colonies to chuſe deputies as ſoon as poſſible, to be ready to attend at that time and place; ſhould events make their meeting neceſſary." 1774.

On the publication of the proceedings of Congreſs, the people obtained that information which they deſired. Zealous to do ſomething for their country; they patiently waited for the deciſion of that body to whoſe direction they had reſigned themſelves. Their determinations were no ſooner known, than they were cheerfully obeyed. Though their power was only adviſory, yet their recommendations were more generally and more effectually carried into execution than the laws of the beſt regulated ſtates. Every individual felt his liberties endangered, and was impreſſed with an idea that his ſafety conſiſted in union. A common intereſt in warding off a common danger, proved a powerful incentive to the moſt implicit ſubmiſſion; provincial congreſſes and ſubordinate committees were every where inſtituted. The reſolutions of the Continental Congreſs were ſanctioned with the univerſal approbation of theſe new repreſentative bodies, and inſtitutions were formed under their direction to carry them into effect.

The regular conſtitutional aſſemblies alſo gave their aſſent to the meaſures recommended. The aſſembly of New-York was the only legiſlature which withheld its approbation. Their metropolis had long been head quarters of the Britiſh army in the Colonies, and many of their beſt families were connected with people of influence in Great Britain. The unequal diſtribution of their land foſtered an ariſtocratic ſpirit. From the operation of theſe and other cauſes, the party for royal government was both more numerous and reſpectable in New-York than in any of the other Colonies.

The aſſembly of Pennſylvania, though compoſed of a majority of Quakers, or of thoſe who were friendly to their intereſt, was the firſt legal body of repreſentatives that ratified unanimouſly the acts of the general Congreſs. They not only voted their approbation of what that body

1774. body had done, but appointed members to reprefent them in the new Congrefs, propofed to be held on the 10th day of May next enfuing, and took fundry fteps to put the province in a pofture of defence.

To relieve the diftreffes of the people of Bofton, liberal collections were made throughout the Colonies, and forwarded for the fupply of their immediate neceffities. Domeftic manufactures were encouraged, that the wants of the inhabitants from the non-importation agreement might be diminifhed, and the greateft zeal was difcovered by a large majority of the people, to comply with the determinations of thefe new-made reprefentative bodies. In this manner, while the forms of the old government fubfifted, a new and independent authority was virtually eftablifhed. It was fo univerfally the fenfe of the people, that the public good required a compliance with the recommendations of Congrefs, that any man who difcovered an anxiety about the continuance of trade and bufinefs was confidered as a felfifh individual, preferring private intereft to the good of his country. Under the influence of thefe principles, the intemperate zeal of the populace tranfported them frequently fo far beyond the limits of moderation, as to apply fingular punifhment to particular perfons who contravened the general fenfe of the community.

The Britifh Miniftry were not lefs difappointed than mortified at this unexpected combination of the Colonies. They had flattered themfelves with a belief, that the malcontents in Bofton were a fmall party headed by a few factious men, and that the majority of the inhabitants would arrange themfelves on the fide of government, as foon as they found Great Britain determined to fupport her authority, and fhould even Maffachufetts take part with its offending capital, they could not believe that the other Colonies would make a common caufe in fupporting fo intemperate a Colony: but fhould even that expectation fail, they conceived that their affociation muft be founded on principles fo adverfe to the interefts and feelings of individuals, that it could not be of long duration. They were encouraged in thefe ill-founded opinions by the

the recollection that the Colonies were frequently quarrelling about boundaries, clashing in interest, differing in policy, manners, customs, forms of government, and religion, and under the influence of a variety of local prejudices, jealousies, and aversions. They also remembered the obstacles which prevented the Colonies from acting together in the execution of schemes planned for their own defence, in the late war against the French and Indians. The failure of the expected co-operation of the Colonies in one uniform system at that time, was not only urged by the British Ministry as a reason for parliamentary control over the whole, but flattered them with a delusive hope, that they never could be brought to combine their counsels and their arms.' Perhaps the Colonists apprehended more danger from British encroachments on their liberties, than from French encroachment on Indian territories in their neighbourhood: or more probably the time to part being come, the Governor of the Universe, by a secret influence on their minds, disposed them to union. From whatever cause it proceeded, it is certain, that a disposition to do, to suffer, and to accommodate, spread from breast to breast, and from Colony to Colony, beyond the reach of human calculation. It seemed as though one mind inspired the whole. The merchants put far behind them the gains of trade, and cheerfully submitted to a total stoppage of business, in obedience to the recommendations of men invested with no legislative powers. The cultivators of the soil, with great unanimity assented to the determination, that the hard earned produce of their farms should remain unshipped, although in case of a free exportation, many would have been eager to have purchased it from them at advanced prices. The sons and daughters of ease renounced imported conveniencies, and voluntarily engaged to eat, drink, and wear, only such articles as their country afforded. These sacrifices were made, not from the pressure of present distress, but on the generous principle of sympathy with an invaded sister Colony, and the prudent policy of guarding against a precedent which might, in a future day, operate against their liberties. 1774.

1774. This ſeaſon of univerſal diſtreſs exhibited a ſtriking proof, how practicable it is for mankind to ſacrifice eaſe, pleaſure, and intereſt, when the mind is ſtrongly excited by its paſſions. In the midſt of their ſufferings, cheerfulneſs appeared in the face of all the people. They counted every thing cheap in compariſon with liberty, and readily gave up whatever tended to endanger it. A noble ſtrain of generoſity and mutual ſupport was generally excited. A great and powerful diffuſion of public ſpirit took place. The animation of the times raiſed the actors in theſe ſcenes above themſelves, and excited them to deeds of ſelf-denial, which the intereſted prudence of calmer ſeaſons can ſcarcely credit.

CHAP. V.

Tranſactions in Great Britain in conſequence of the proceedings of Congreſs, in 1774.

SOME time before the proceedings of Congreſs reached England, it was juſtly apprehended that a non-importation agreement would be one of the meaſures they would adopt. The Miniſtry apprehending that this event, by diſtreſſing the trading and manufacturing towns, might influence votes againſt the court, in the election of a new Parliament, which was of courſe to come on in the ſucceeding year, ſuddenly diſſolved the Parliament, and immediately ordered a new one to be choſen. It was their deſign to have the whole buſineſs of elections over, before the inconveniencies of a non-importation agreement could be felt. The nation was thus ſurpriſed into an election without knowing that the late American acts had driven the Colonies into a firm combination, to ſupport, and make a common cauſe, with the people of Maſſachuſetts. A new Parliament was returned, which met in thirty-four days after the proceedings of Congreſs were firſt publiſhed in Philadelphia, and before they were known in Great Britain. This, for the moſt part, conſiſted either of the former members, or of thoſe who held ſimilar ſentiments.

On the 30th of November, the King, in his ſpeech to his new Parliament, informed them, "that a moſt daring ſpirit of reſiſtance and diſobedience to the laws unhappily prevailed in the province of Maſſachuſetts, and had broke forth in freſh violences of a very criminal nature, and that theſe proceedings had been countenanced and encouraged in his other Colonies, and unwarrantable attempts had been made to obſtruct the commerce of his kingdoms by unlawful combinations, and that he had taken ſuch meaſures, and given ſuch orders as he judged moſt proper and effectual for carrying into execution the laws which were paſſed in the laſt ſeſſion of the late Parliament, relative to the province of Maſſachuſetts." 1774.

An addreſs which was propoſed in the Houſe of Commons in anſwer to this ſpeech, produced a warm debate. The Miniſter was reminded of the great effects he had predicted from the late American acts, "They were to humble that whole continent without farther trouble, and the puniſhment of Boſton was to ſtrike ſo univerſal a panic on all the Colonies, that it would be totally abandoned, and inſtead of obtaining relief, a dread of the ſame fate would awe the other provinces to a moſt reſpectful ſubmiſſion." An addreſs re-echoing the royal ſpeech, was, nevertheleſs, carried by a great majority. A ſimilar addreſs was carried, after a ſpirited debate, in the Upper Houſe, but the Lords Richmond, Portland, Rockingham, Stamford, Stanhope, Torrington, Ponſonby, Wycombe, and Camden, entered a proteſt againſt it, which concluded with theſe remarkable words: "Whatever may be the miſchievous deſigns or the inconſiderate temerity which leads others to this deſperate courſe, we wiſh to be known as perſons who have diſapproved of meaſures ſo injurious in their paſt effects and future tendency, and who are not in haſte, without inquiry or information, to commit ourſelves in declarations, which may precipitate our country into all the calamities of a civil war."

Soon after the meeting of the new Parliament, the proceedings of the Congreſs reached Great Britain. The firſt impreſſion made by them, was in favour of

 America.

1774. America. Adminiftration feemed to be ftaggered, and their oppofers triumphed in the eventual truth of their prediction, that an univerfal confederacy to refift Great Britain would be the confequence of the late American acts. The Secretary of State, after a day's perufal, during which a council was held, faid that the petition of Congrefs to the King was a decent and proper one. He alfo cheerfully undertook to prefent it, and afterwards reported, that his Majefty was pleafed very gracioufly to receive it, and to promife to lay it before his two Houfes of Parliament. From thefe favourable circumftances, the fanguine friends of America concluded, that it was intended to make the petition the foundation of a change of meafures, but thefe hopes were of fhort duration.

The warmer partifans of adminiftration placed fo much confidence in the efficacy of the meafures they had lately taken to bring the Americans to obedience, that they regarded the boldeft refolutions of Congrefs as the idle clamors of an unruly multitude, which proper exertions on the part of Great Britain would fpeedily filence. So much had been afferted and contradicted by both parties, that the bulk of the people could form no certain opinion on the fubject.

The Parliament adjourned for the Chriftmas holidays without coming to any decifion on American affairs. As
1775. foon as they met in January, a number of papers containing information were laid before them. Thefe were moftly letters from governors and other fervants of his Majefty, which detailed the oppofition of the Colonifts in language calculated to give a bad impreffion of their paft conduct, and an alarming one of their future intentions.

It was a circumftance unfavourable to the lovers of peace, that the rulers of Great Britain received almoft the whole of their American intelligence from thofe who had an intereft in deceiving them. Governors, judges, revenue-officers, and other royal fervants, being both appointed and paid by Great Britain, fancied that zeal for the intereft of that country would be the moft likely way to enfure their farther promotion. They were, therefore,

force, in their official diſpatches to government, often tempted to abuſe the Coloniſts, with a view of magnifying their own watchfulneſs, and recommending themſelves to Great Britain. The plain ſimple language of truth was not acceptable to courtly ears. Miniſters received and careſſed thoſe, and thoſe only, whoſe repreſentations coincided with their own views and wiſhes. They who contended that by the ſpirit of the Engliſh conſtitution, Britiſh ſubjects reſiding on one ſide of the Atlantic, were entitled to equal privileges with thoſe who reſided on the other, were unnoticed, while the abettors of miniſterial meaſures were heard with attention. 1775.

In this hour of national infatuation, Lord Chatham, after a long retirement, reſumed his ſeat in the Houſe of Lords, and exerted his unrivalled eloquence in ſundry attempts to diſſuade his countrymen from attempting to ſubdue the Americans by force of arms. The native dignity of his ſuperior genius, and the recollection of his important ſervices, entitled him to diſtinguiſhed notice. His language, voice, and geſture, were calculated to force conviction on his hearers. Though venerable for his age, he ſpoke with the fire of youth. He introduced himſelf with ſome general obſervations on the importance of the American quarrel. He enlarged on the dangerous events that were coming on the nation in conſequence of the preſent diſpute. He arraigned the conduct of Miniſters with great ſeverity, and reprobated their whole ſyſtem of American politics, and moved that an humble addreſs be preſented to his Majeſty, moſt humbly to adviſe and beſeech him to diſpatch orders to General Gage to remove his Majeſty's forces from the town of Boſton. His Lordſhip ſupported this motion in a pathetic animated ſpeech, but it was rejected by a great majority. From this and other circumſtances, it ſoon became evident, that the Americans could expect no more favour from the new Parliament than they had experienced from the late one. A majority in both Houſes was againſt them, and reſolved to compel them to obedience; but a reſpectable minority in their favour was ſtrongly ſeconded by petitions from the merchants and manufacturers Jan. 20.

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1775. throughout the kingdom, and particularly by thoſe of London and Briſtol. As theſe were well appriſed of the conſequences that muſt follow from a proſecution of coercive meaſures, and deeply intereſted in the event, they made uncommon exertions to prevent their adoption. They circumſtantially pointed out the various evils that would reſult from them, and faithfully warned their countrymen of the danger to which their commercial intereſts were expoſed.

When the petition from the merchants of London was read in the Houſe of Commons, it was moved to refer it to the committee appointed to take into conſideration the American papers; but it was moved by way of amendment on the miniſterial ſide, that it ſhould be referred to a ſeparate committee, to meet on the 27th, the day ſucceeding that appointed for the conſideration of American papers. This, though a diſhonourable evaſion, was carried by a majority of more than two to one.

A ſimilar fate attended the petitions from Briſtol, Glaſgow, Norwich, Liverpool, Mancheſter, Birmingham, Woolverhampton, Dudley, and ſome other places. Theſe on their being preſented, were in like manner conſigned to what the oppoſition humourouſly termed, the committee of oblivion.

About the ſame time a petition was offered from Mr. Bollan, Dr. Franklin, and Mr. Lee, ſtating that they were authorized by Congreſs to preſent their petition to the King, which his Majeſty had referred to that Houſe, and that they were enabled to throw great light on the ſubject, and praying to be heard at the bar in ſupport of the ſaid petition. The friends of the Miniſtry alledged, that as Congreſs was not a legal body, nothing could be received from them. It was in vain replied, that the Congreſs, however illegal as to other purpoſes, was ſufficiently legal for preſenting a petition, and that as it was ſigned by the individual members of Congreſs, it might be received as a petition from individuals; that the ſigners of it were perſons of great influence in America, and it was the right of all ſubjects to have their petitions heard.

In the courfe of the debate on Lord Chatham's motion for addreffing his Majefty to withdraw his troops from Bofton, it had been obferved by fome Lords in adminiftration, that it was common and eafy to cenfure their meafures, but thofe who did fo, propofed nothing better. Lord Chatham anfwered, that he fhould not be one of thofe idle cenfurers, that he had thought long and clofely upon the fubject, and purpofed foon to lay before their Lordfhips the refult of his meditations, in a plan for healing the differences between Great Britain and the Colonies, and for reftoring peace to the empire. When he had matured his plan, he introduced it into the Houfe in the form of a bill for fettling the troubles in America. In this he propofed that the Colonifts fhould make a full acknowledgement of the fupremacy of the legiflature, and the fuperintending power of the Britifh Parliament. The bill did not abfolutely decide on the right of taxation, but partly as a matter of grace, and partly as a compromife, declared and enacted, "that no tollage tax, or other charge fhould be levied in America, except by common confent in their provincial affemblies." It afferted the right of the King to fend a legal army to any part of his dominions at all times, but declared, "that no military force could ever be lawfully employed to violate or deftroy the juft rights of the people." It alfo legalifed the holding a Congrefs in the enfuing May for the double purpofe "of recognifing the fupreme legiflative authority, and fuperintending power of Parliament over the Colonies, and for making a free grant to the King, his heirs and fucceffors, of a certain and perpetual revenue fubject to the difpofition of Parliament, and applicable to the alleviation of the national debt." On thefe conditions the bill propofed, "to reftrain the powers of the admiralty courts to their ancient limits, and fufpended for a limited time thofe acts which had been complained of by Congrefs." It propofed to place the judges in America on the fame footing, as to the holding of their falaries and offices, with thofe in England, and fecured to the Colonies all the privileges, franchifes, and immunities, granted by their feveral charters and conftitutions. His Lordfhip introduced this plan

1775.

Feb. 1ft.

1775. plan with a ſpeech, in which he explained and ſupported every part of it. When he ſat down, Lord Dartmouth roſe and ſaid, "it contained matter of ſuch magnitude as to require conſideration, and therefore hoped, that the noble Earl did not expect their Lordſhips to decide upon it by an immediate vote, but would be willing it ſhould lie on the table for conſideration." Lord Chatham anſwered, "that he expected no more," but Lord Sandwich roſe, and in a petulant ſpeech oppoſed its being received at all, and gave his opinion, "that it ought immediately to be rejected with the contempt it deſerved. That he could not believe it to be the production of any Britiſh peer—that it appeared to him rather the work of ſome American," and turning his face towards Dr. Franklin, who was leaning on the bar, ſaid, "he fancied he had in his eye the perſon who drew it up, one of the bittereſt and moſt miſchievous enemies this country had ever known. This turned the eyes of many Lords on the inſulted American, who, with that ſelf-command which is peculiar to great minds, kept his countenance unmoved. Several other Lords of the adminiſtration gave their ſentiments alſo, for rejecting Lord Chatham's conciliatory bill, urging that it not only gave a ſanction to the traiterous proceedings of the Congreſs already held, but legaliſed their future meeting. They enlarged on the rebellious temper and hoſtile diſpoſition of the Americans, and ſaid, "that, though the duty on tea was the pretence, the reſtrictions on their commerce, and the hopes of throwing them off, were the real motives of their diſobedience, and that to concede now, would be to give up the point for ever."

The Dukes of Richmond and Mancheſter, Lord Camden, Lord Lyttleton, and others, were for receiving Lord Chatham's conciliatory bill——ſome from approbation of its principles, but others only from a regard to the character and dignity of the Houſe.

Lord Dartmouth, who from indeciſion rarely had any will or judgement of his own, and who, with diſpoſitions for the beſt meaſures, could be eaſily prevailed upon to join in ſupport of the worſt, finding the oppoſition from his

his coadjutors in adminiſtration unexpectedly ſtrong, 1775.
turned round and gave his voice with them for immediately rejecting the plan. Lord Chatham, in reply to Lord Sandwich, declared, "the bill propoſed by him to be entirely his own, but he made no ſcruple to declare, that if he were the firſt Miniſter of the country, and had the care of ſettling this momentous buſineſs, he ſhould not be aſhamed of publicly calling to his aſſiſtance a perſon ſo perfectly acquainted with the whole of the American affairs as the gentleman alluded to, and ſo injuriouſly reflected upon (Dr. Franklin.) One whom all Europe held in high eſtimation for his knowledge and wiſdom, and ranked with her Boyles and her Newtons—who was an honour, not only to the Engliſh nation, but to human nature."

The plan propoſed by Lord Chatham was rejected by a majority of 64 to 32, and without being admitted to lie on the table. That a bill on ſo important a ſubject, offered by one of the firſt men of the age, and who, as prime Miniſter of the nation, had but a few years before taken up Great Britain when in the loweſt deſpondency, and conducted her to victory and glory, through a war with two of the moſt powerful kingdoms of Europe, ſhould be rejected without any conſideration, or even a ſecond reading, was not only a breach of decency, but a departure from that propriety of conduct which ſhould mark the proceedings of a branch of the national legiſlature. It could not but ſtrike every thinking American, that ſuch legiſlators, influenced by paſſion, prejudice, and party ſpirit, many of whom were totally ignorant of the ſubject, and who would not give themſelves an opportunity by a ſecond reading, or farther conſideration, to inform themſelves better, were very unfit to exerciſe unlimited ſupremacy over three millions of virtuous, ſenſible people, inhabiting the other ſide of the globe.

On the day after the rejection of Lord Chatham's bill, a petition was preſented to the Houſe of Commons from the planters of the ſugar colonies reſiding in Great Britain, and the merchants of London trading to the Colonies.—In this they ſtated, that the Britiſh property in the

1775. the West-India islands amounted to upwards of thirty millions, and that a farther property of many millions was employed in the commerce created by the said islands, and that the profits and produce of these immense capitals, which ultimately centered in Great Britain, would be deranged and endangered by the continuance of the American troubles. The petitioners were on the 16th of the next month admitted to a hearing, when Mr. Glover, as their agent, ably demonstrated the folly and danger of persevering in the contest, but without any effect. The immediate coercion of the Colonies was resolved upon, and the Ministry would not suffer themselves to be diverted from its execution. They were confident of success, if they could once bring the controversy to the decision of arms. They expected more from conquest than they could promise themselves by negociation or compromise. The free constitutions of the Colonies and their rapid progress in population were beheld with a jealous eye, as the natural means of independence They conceived the most effectual method of retaining them long, would be to reduce them soon. They hoped to be able to extinguish remonstrance and debate by such a speedy and decisive conquest, as would give them opportunity to new-model the colonial constitutions, on such principles as would have prevented future altercations on the subject of their chartered rights. Every representation that tended to retard or obstruct the coercion of the Colonies, was therefore considered as tending only to prolong the controversy.—Confident of victory, and believing that nothing short of it would restore the peace of the empire, the Ministry turned a deaf ear to all petitions and representations. They even presumed that the petitioners, when they found Great Britain determined on war, would assist in carrying it on with vigour, in order to expedite the settlement of the dispute. They took it for granted, that when the petitioning towns were convinced that a renewal of the commercial intercourse between the two countries would be sooner obtained by going on, than turning back; that the same interest which led them at first to petition, would lead them afterwards to support coercive

ercive meaſures, as the moſt effectual and ſhorteſt way of securing commerce from all future interruptions. 1775.

The determination of miniſters to perſevere was alſo forwarded by hopes of the defection of New-York from her ſiſter Colonies.—They flattered themſelves, that when one link of the continental chain gave away, it would be eaſy to make an impreſſion on the disjointed extremities. Every attempt to cloſe the breach which had been opened by the former Parliament, having failed, and the Miniſtry having made up their minds on the mode of proceeding with the Coloniſts, their propoſed plan was briefly unfolded. This was to ſend a greater force to America, and to bring in a temporary act to put a ſtop to all the foreign trade of the New England Colonies, till they ſhould make proper ſubmiſſions and acknowledgements. An addreſs to his Majeſty was at the ſame time moved for, to "beſeech him to take the moſt effectual meaſures, to enforce due obedience to the laws and authority of the ſupreme legiſlature."

Truly critical was that moment to the union of the empire. A new Parliament might, without the charge of inconſiſtency, have repealed acts, paſſed by a former one, which had been found inconvenient on experiment; but pride and paſſion, under the ſpecious names of national dignity and zeal for the ſupremacy of Parliament, induced the adoption of meaſures, for immediately compelling the ſubmiſſion of the Colonies.

The repeal of a few acts of Parliament would, at this time, have ſatisfied America. Though ſhe had been extending her claims, yet ſhe was ſtill willing that Great Britain ſhould monopolize her trade, and that the Parliament ſhould regulate it for the common benefit of the empire; nor was ſhe diſpoſed to abridge his Majeſty of any of his uſual prerogatives. This authority was ſufficient for the Mother Country to retain the Coloniſts in a profitable ſtate of ſubordination, and yet not ſo much as to be inconſiſtent with their claims, or the ſecurity of their moſt important intereſts. Britain viewed the matter in a different light. To recede at this time, was to acknowledge, that the Miniſtry had hitherto been in the wrong, a con-

1775. a conceffion rarely made by private perfons, but more rarely ftill by men in public ftations. The leading members in Parliament, not diftinguifhing the oppofition of freemen to unconftitutional innovations, from the turbulence of licentious mobs breaking over the bounds of law and conftitution, fuppofed that to redrefs grievances was to renounce fovereignty. This interference, in fome degree, refulted from the broad bafis which they had affigned to the claims of the Mother Country. If, as was contended, on the part of Great Britain, they had a right to bind the Colonies in all cafes whatfoever, and the power of Parliament over them was abfolute and unlimited, they were precluded from refcinding any act of theirs, however oppreffive, when demanded as a matter of right. They were too highly impreffed with ideas of their unlimited authority to repeal any of their laws on the principle, that they had not a conftitutional power to enact them, and too unwife to adopt the fame meafure on the ground of political expediency. Unfortunately for both countries, two opinions were generally believed, neither of which was perhaps true in its utmoft extent, and one of which was moft affuredly falfe. The Miniftry and Parliament of England proceeded on the idea, that the claims of the Colonifts amounted to abfolute independence, and that a fixed refolution to renounce the fovereignty of Great Britain was concealed under the fpecious pretext of a redrefs of grievances. The Americans, on the other hand, were equally confident that the Mother Country not only harboured defigns unfriendly to their interefts, but ferioufly intended to introduce arbitrary government. Jealoufies of each other were reciprocally indulged to the deftruction of all confidence, and to the final difmemberment of the empire.

In difcuffing the meafures propofed by the Minifter for the coercion of the Colonies, the whole ground of the American controverfy was traverfed. The comparative merits of conceffion and coercion were placed in every point of view. Some of the minority in both Houfes of Parliament pointed out the dangers that would attend a war with America---the likelihood of the interference of other

other powers—the probability of losing, and the impossibility of gaining any thing more than was already possessed. On the other hand, the friends of the Ministry asserted, that the Americans had been long aiming at independence—that they were magnifying pretended grievances to cover a premeditated revolt—that it was the business and duty of Englishmen, at every hazard to prevent its completion, and to bring them back to a remembrance that their present greatness was owing to the Mother Country; and that even their existence had been purchased at an immense expence of British blood and treasure. They acknowledged the danger to be great, but said, "it must be encountered; that every day's delay increased the evil, and that it would be base and cowardly to shift off for the present an unavoidable contest, which must fall with accumulated weight on the heads of their posterity." The danger of foreign interference was denied, and it was contended that an appearance of vigorous measures, with a farther re-inforcement of troops at Boston, would be sufficient to quell the disturbances; and it was urged, that the friends of government were both strong and numerous, and only waited for proper support, and favourable circumstances to declare themselves. 1775.

After long and warm debates, and one or two protests, the ministerial plans were carried by great majorities. In consequence thereof, on the 9th of February, 1775, a joint address, from both Lords and Commons, was presented to his Majesty, in which "they returned thanks for the communication of the papers relative to the state of the British Colonies in America, and gave it as their opinion, that a rebellion actually existed in the province of Massachusetts, and beseeched his Majesty that he would take the most effectual measures to enforce due obedience to the laws and authority of the supreme legislature, and begged in the most solemn manner to assure his Majesty that it was their fixed resolution, at the hazard of their lives and properties, to stand by his Majesty against all rebellious attempts, in the maintenance of the just rights of his Majesty, and the two Houses of Parliament."

1775. The Lords, Richmond, Craven, Archer, Abergavenny, Rockingham, Wycombe, Courtenay, Torrington, Ponsonby, Cholmondeley, Abingdon, Rutland, Camden, Effingham, Stanhope, Scarborough, Fitzwilliam, and Tankerville, protested against this address, "as founded on no proper parliamentary information, being introduced by refusing to suffer the presentation of petitions against it (though it be the undoubted right of the subject to present the same)—as following the rejection of every mode of conciliation—as holding out no substantial offer of redress of grievances, and as promising to support those Ministers who had inflamed America, and grossly misconducted the affairs of Great Britain."

By the address, against which this protest was entered, the Parliament of Great Britain passed the Rubicon. In former periods, it might be alledged that the claims of the Colonies were undefined, and that their unanimous resolution to defend them was unknown; but after a free representation from twelve provinces had stated their rights, and pledged themselves to each other to support them, and their determinations were known, a resolution that a rebellion actually existed, and that at the hazard of their lives and properties, they would stand by his Majesty against all rebellious attempts, was a virtual declaration of war. Both parties were now bound in consequence of their own acts, to submit their controversy to the decision of arms. Issue was joined by the approbation Congress had given to the Suffolk resolves, and by this subsequent joint address of both Houses of Parliament to his Majesty. It is probable that neither party, in the beginning, intended to go thus far, but by the inscrutable operations of Providence, each was permitted to adopt such measures as not only rent the empire, but involved them both, with their own consent, in all the calamities of a long and bloody war. The answer from the throne to the joint address of Parliament contained assurances of taking the most speedy and effectual measures for enforcing due obedience to the laws, and authority of the supreme legislature. This answer was accompanied with a message to the Commons, in which

which they were informed that fome augmentation to the forces by fea and land would be neceffary. An augmentation of 4383 men to the land forces, and of 2000 feamen to be employed for the enfuing year, was accordingly afked for, and carried without difficulty. By the firft it was ftated, that the force at Bofton would be ten thoufand men, a number fuppofed to be fufficient for enforcing the laws. Other fchemes, in addition to a military force, were thought advifeable for promoting the projected coercion of the Colonies. With this view a punifhment was propofed, fo univerfal in its operation, that it was expected the inhabitants of the New-England Colonies, to obtain a riddance of its heavy preffure, would intereft themfelves in procuring a general fubmiffion to Parliament. Lord North moved for leave to bring in a bill to reftrain the trade and commerce of the provinces of Maffachufetts Bay, and New-Hampfhire, the Colonies of Connecticut and Rhode-Ifland, and Providence Plantations in North America, to Great Britain, Ireland, and the Britifh iflands in the Weft Indies, and to prohibit fuch provinces and Colonies from carrying on any fifhery on the Banks of Newfoundland, or other places therein to be mentioned, under certain conditions, and for a limited time. The motion for this bill was fupported by declaring, that as the Americans had refufed to trade with the Mother Country, they ought not to be permitted to trade with any other. It was known that the New-England Colonies carried on a circuitous trade and fifhing, on the Banks of Newfoundland, to a great extent. To cut them off from this refource, they were legiflatively forbidden to fifh, or to carry on foreign trade. It was prefumed that the wants of a large body of people, deprived of employment, would create clamour in favour of reconciliation.

1775.

Feb. 10.

The Britifh Minifter expected to excite the fame temper in the unemployed New-England men, that Congrefs meant to raife by the non-importation agreement among the Britifh merchants and manufacturers. The motion for this bill brought into view the whole of the American controverfy. The oppofers of it faid, that its cruelty exceeded

1775. exceeded the examples of hostile rigour with avowed enemies; for that in the most dangerous wars, the fishing craft was universally spared---they desired the proposer of the bill to recollect, that he had often spoken of the multitude of friends he had in those provinces, and that now he confounded the innocent with the guilty---friends with enemies, and involved his own partisans in one common ruin with his opposers. They alledged farther, that the bill would operate against the people of Great Britain, as the people of New-England were in debt to them, and had no other means of paying that debt, but through the fishery, and the circuitous trade dependent on it. It was observed, that the fishermen being cut off from employment must turn soldiers, and that therefore while they were provoking the Americans to resistance by one set of acts, they were furnishing them with the means of recruiting an army by another. The favourers of the bill denied the charge of severity, alledging that the Colonists could not complain of any distress the bill might bring on them, as they not only deserved it, but had set the example, that they had entered into unlawful combinations to ruin the merchants and manufacturers of Great Britain. It was said, that if any foreign power had offered a similar insult or injury, the whole nation would have demanded satisfaction. They contended that it was a bill of humanity and mercy; for, said they, the Colonists have incurred all the penalties of rebellion, and are liable to the severest military execution. Instead of inflicting the extent of what they deserved, the bill only proposes to bring them to their senses by restricting their trade. They urged farther, that the measure was necessary, for said they, "the Americans have frequently imposed on us, by threatening to withdraw their trade, hoping through mercantile influence to bend the legislature to their demands---that this was the third time they had thrown the commerce of Great Britain into a state of confusion. That both Colonies and commerce were better lost than preserved on such terms." They added farther, that they must either relinquish their connection with America, or fix it on such a basis as would prevent

a return

a return of these evils. They admitted the bill to be coercive, but said, "That the coercion which put the speediest end to the dispute, was eventually the most merciful." 1775.

In the progress of the bill, a petition from the merchants and traders of London, who were interested in the American commerce, was presented against it. They were heard by their agent, Mr. David Barclay, and a variety of witnesses were examined before the House. In the course of their evidence it appeared that in the year 1764, the four provinces of New-England employed in their several fisheries no less than 45,880 ton of shipping, and 6000 men; and that the produce of their fisheries that year in foreign markets amounted to 322,220l. 16s. sterling. It also appeared that the fisheries had very much increased since that time—that all the materials used in them, except salt and the timber of which the vessels were built, were purchased from Great Britain; and that the net proceeds of the whole were remitted thither. All this information was disregarded. After much opposition in both Houses, and a protest in the House of Lords, the bill was, by a great majority, finally ratified. So intent was the Ministry and Parliament on the coercion of the Colonists, that every other interest was sacrificed to its accomplishment. They conceived the question between the two countries to be simply, whether they should abandon their claims, and at once give up all the advantages arising from sovereignty and commerce, or resort to violent measures for their security. March 30.

Since the year 1769, when a Secretary of State officially disclaimed all views of an American revenue, little mention had been made of that subject, but the decided majority which voted with the Ministry on this occasion, emboldened Lord North once more to present it to the view of his countrymen; he, therefore, brought into Parliament a scheme which had the double recommendation of holding forth the semblance of conciliation, and the prospect of an easement of British taxes, by a productive revenue from the Colonies. This was a resolution which passed on the 20th of February.

"Resolved,

1775. "Refolved, That when the Governor, Council, and Affembly, or General Court, or any of his Majefty's Provinces or Colonies in America, fhall propofe to make provifion according to the condition, circumftances, and fituations of fuch Province or Colony, for contributing their proportion for the common defence, (fuch proportion to be raifed under the authority of the General Court or General Affembly of fuch Province or Colony, and difpofable by Parliament) and fhall engage to make provifion alfo for the fupport of the civil government, and the adminiftration of juftice in fuch Province or Colony, it will be proper, if fuch propofal fhall be approved by his Majefty and the two Houfes of Parliament, and for fo long as fuch provifion fhall be made accordingly, to forbear, in refpect of fuch Province or Colony, to levy any duty, tax, or affeffment, except only fuch duties as it may be expedient to continue to levy or to impofe for the regulation of commerce, the net produce of the duties laft mentioned, to be carried to the account of fuch Province or Colony refpectively."

This was introduced by the Minifter in a long fpeech, in which he afferted, that it would be an infallible touchftone to try the Americans; "If," faid he, "their oppofition is only founded on the principles which they pretend, they muft agree with this propofition, but if they have defigns in contemplation different from thofe they avow, their refufal will convict them of duplicity." The oppofitions to the Minifter's motion originated among thofe who had fupported him in previous queftions. They objected to the propofal, that in effect it was an acknowledgement of fomething grievous in the idea of taxing America by Parliament, and that it was, therefore, a departure from their own principles. They contended that it was improper to make conceffions to rebels with arms in their hands, or to enter into any meafures for a fettlement with the Americans, in which they did not, as a preliminary, acknowledge the fupremacy of Parliament. The Minifter was likely to be deferted by fome of his partifans till others explained the confiftency of the fcheme with their former declarations.

It

It was asked, "what shall Parliament lose by acceding to this resolution? Not the right of taxing America, for this is most expressly reserved. Not the profitable exercise of this right, for it proposed to enforce the only essential part of taxation, by compelling the Americans to raise not only what they, but what we, think reasonable. We are not going to war for trifles and a vain point of honour, but for substantial revenue." The Minister farther declared, that he did not expect his proposition to be generally relished by the Americans. But, said he, if it does no good in the Colonies, it will do good here, it will unite the people of England, by holding out to them a distinct object of revenue. He added farther, as it tends to unite England, it is likely to disunite America, for if only one province accepts the offer, their confederacy, which only makes them formidable, will be broken. 1775.

The opposers of Ministry attacked the proposition with the combined forces of wit and argument. They animadverted on the inconsistency of holding forth the same resolution as a measure of concession, and as an assertion of authority. They remarked, that hitherto it had been constantly denied that they had any contest about an American revenue—that the whole had been a dispute about obedience to trade-laws and the general legislative authority of Parliament, but now Ministers suddenly changed their language, and proposed to interest the nation—console the manufacturers, and animate the soldiery, by persuading them that it is not a contest for empty honour, but for the acquisition of a substantial revenue. It was said that the Americans would be as effectually taxed, without their consent, by being compelled to pay a gross sum, as by an aggregate of small duties to the same amount; that this scheme of taxation exceeded in oppression any that the rapacity of mankind had hitherto devised. In other cases, a specific sum was demanded, and the people might reasonably presume that the remainder was their own; but here they were wholly in the dark as to the extent of the demand.

1775. This propofition, however, for conciliation, though illy relifhed by many of the friends of Miniftry, was carried on a divifion of 274 to 88. On its tranfmiffion to the Colonies, it did not produce the effects of difunion expected from it. It was unanimoufly rejected. The reafon for this cannot be expreffed better than in the act of Congrefs on that fubject, which, after the recital of the faid conciliatory motion, proceeded in the following words, "The Congrefs took the faid refolution into confideration, and are thereupon of opinion,

"That the Colonies of America are entitled to the fole and exclufive privilege of giving and granting their own money. That this involves a right of deliberating whether they will make any gift, for what purpofes it fhall be made, and what fhall be its amount; and that it is a high breach of this privilege for any body of men, extraneous to their conftitutions, to prefcribe the purpofes for which money fhall be levied on them, to take to themfelves the authority of judging of their conditions, circumftances, and fituations, and of determining the amount of the contribution to be levied.

That as the Colonies poffefs a right of appropriating their gifts, fo are they entitled at all times to inquire into their application, to fee that they be not wafted among the venal and corrupt for the purpofe of undermining the civil rights of the givers, nor yet be diverted to the fupport of ftanding armies, inconfiftent with their freedom and fubverfive of their quiet. To propofe, therefore, as this refolution does, that the monies given by the Colonies fhall be fubject to the difpofal of Parliament alone, is to propofe that they fhall relinquifh this right of inquiry, and put it in the power of others to render their gifts ruinous in proportion as they are liberal.

That this privilege of giving or of withholding our monies, is an important barrier againft the undue exertion of prerogative, which, if left altogether without controul, may be exercifed to our great oppreffion; and all hiftory fhews how efficacious is its interceffion for redrefs of grievances, and re-eftablifhment of rights, and how improvident it would be to part with fo powerful a mediator.

We

We are of opinion that the propoſition contained in this reſolution, is unreaſonable and inſidious: unreaſonable, becauſe, if we declare we accede to it, we declare without reſervation, we will purchaſe the favour of Parliament, not knowing at the ſame time at what price they will pleaſe to eſtimate their favour; it is inſidious, becauſe individual Colonies, having bid and bidden again, till they find the avidity of the ſeller too great for all their powers to ſatisfy, are then to return into oppoſition, divided from their ſiſter Colonies whom the Miniſter will have previouſly detached by a grant of eaſier terms, or by an artful procraſtination of a definitive anſwer. 1775.

That the ſuſpenſion of the exerciſe of their pretended power of taxation being expreſsly made commenſurate with the continuance of our gifts, theſe muſt be perpetual to make that ſo. Whereas no experience has ſhewn that a gift of perpetual revenue ſecures a perpetual return of duty or of kind diſpoſition. On the contrary, the Parliament itſelf, wiſely attentive to this obſervation, are in the eſtabliſhed practice of granting their ſupplies from year to year only.

Deſirous and determined as we are to conſider, in the moſt diſpaſſionate view, every ſeeming advance towards a reconciliation made by the Britiſh Parliament, let our brethren of Britain reflect what would have been the ſacrifice to men of free ſpirits, had even fair terms been proffered, as theſe inſidious propoſals were, with circumſtances of inſult and defiance. A propoſition to give our money, accompanied with large fleets and armies, ſeems addreſſed to our fears rather than to our freedom. With what patience would Britons have received articles of treaty from any power on earth when borne on the point of a bayonet by military plenipotentiaries?

We think the attempt unneceſſary to raiſe upon us, by force or by threats, our proportional contributions to the common defence, when all know, and themſelves acknowledge, we have fully contributed, whenever called upon to do ſo in the character of freemen.

We are of opinion it is not juſt that the Colonies ſhould be required to oblige themſelves to other contributions, while Great Britain poſſeſſes a monopoly of their trade. This

1775. This of itſelf lays them under heavy contribution. To demand, therefore, additional aids in the form of a tax, is to demand the double of their equal proportion; if we are to contribute equally with the other parts of the empire, let us equally with them enjoy free commerce with the whole world. But while the reſtrictions on our trade ſhut to us the reſources of wealth, is it juſt we ſhould bear all other burthens equally with thoſe to whom every reſource is open?

We conceive that the Britiſh Parliament has no right to intermeddle with our proviſions for the ſupport of civil government or adminiſtration of juſtice. The proviſions we have made are ſuch as pleaſe ourſelves, and are agreeable to our own circumſtances: they anſwer the ſubſtantial purpoſes of government and of juſtice, and other purpoſes than theſe ſhould not be anſwered. We do not mean that our people ſhall be burthened with oppreſſive taxes, to provide ſinecures for the idle or the wicked, under colour of providing for a civil liſt. While Parliament purſue their plan of civil government within their own juriſdiction, we alſo hope to purſue our's without moleſtation.

We are of opinion the propoſition is altogether unſatisfactory; becauſe it imports only a ſuſpenſion of the mode, not a renunciation of the pretended right to tax us: becauſe, too, it does not propoſe to repeal the ſeveral acts of Parliament paſſed for the purpoſes of reſtraining the trade, and altering the form of government of one of our Colonies; extending the boundaries and changing the government of Quebec; enlarging the juriſdiction of the courts of admiralty and vice-admiralty; taking from us the rights of a trial by jury of the vicinage, in caſes affecting both life and property; tranſporting us into other countries to be tried for criminal offences; exempting by mock trial the murderers of Coloniſts from puniſhment; and quartering ſoldiers on us in time of profound peace. Nor do they renounce the power of ſuſpending our own legiſlatures, and legiſlating for us themſelves in all caſes whatſoever. On the contrary, to ſhew they mean no diſcontinuance of injury, they paſs acts at the very time

time of holding out this propofition for reftraining the commerce and fifheries of the provinces of New-England, and for interdicting the trade of other Colonies with all foreign nations and with each other. This proves unequivocally that they mean not to relinquifh the exercife of indifcriminate legiflation over us. 1775.

Upon the whole, this propofition feems to have been held up to the world, to deceive it into a belief that there was nothing in difpute between us but the mode of levying taxes; and that the Parliament having now been fo good as to give up this, the Colonies are unreafonable if not perfectly fatisfied: whereas, in truth, our adverfaries ftill claim a right of demanding *ad libitum*, and of taxing us themfelves to the full amount of their demand, if we do comply with it. This leaves us without any thing we can call property. But, what is of more importance, and what in this propofal they keep out of fight, as if no fuch point was now in conteft between us, they claim a right to alter our charters and eftablifh laws, and leave us without any fecurity for our lives or liberties. The propofition feems alfo to have been calculated more particularly to lull into fatal fecurity our well affected fellow fubjects on the other fide the water, till time fhould be given for the operation of thofe arms, which a Britifh Minifter pronounced would inftantaneoufly reduce the "cowardly" fons of America to unreferved fubmiffion. But when the world reflects how inadequate to juftice are thefe vaunted terms; when it attends to the rapid and bold fucceffion of injuries, which, during a courfe of eleven years, have been aimed at thefe Colonies; when it reviews the pacific and refpectful expoftulations, which, during that whole time, were the fole arms we oppofed to them; when it obferves that our complaints were either not heard at all, or were anfwered with new and accumulated injuries; when it recollects that the Minifter himfelf on an early occafion declared, "that he would never treat with America till he had brought her to his feet," and that an avowed partifan of Miniftry has more lately denounced againft us the dreadful fentence, "*delenda eft Carthago*," that this was done in

1775. in presence of a British senate, and being unreproved by them, must be taken to be their own sentiment, (especially as the purpose has already in part been carried into execution, by their treatment of Boston and burning of Charlestown;) when it considers the great armaments with which they have invaded us, and the circumstances of cruelty with which these have commenced and prosecuted hostilities; when these things, we say, are laid together and attentively considered, can the world be deceived into an opinion that we are unreasonable, or can it hesitate to believe with us, that nothing but our own exertions may defeat the ministerial sentence of death or abject submission."

Other plans for conciliation with the Colonies, founded on principles very different from those which were the basis of Lord North's conciliatory motion, were brought forward in the House of Commons, but without receiving its approbation. The most remarkable of these was proposed by Mr. Edmund Burke, in a speech, which for strength of argument, extent of information, and sublimity of language, would bear a comparison with the most finished performance that ancient or modern times have produced. In his introduction to this admirable speech, he examined and explained the natural and accidental circumstances of the Colonies, with respect to situation, resources, number, population, commerce, fisheries, and agriculture, and from these considerations shewed their importance. He then inquired into their unconquerable spirit of freedom; and he traced it to its original sources; from these circumstances he inferred the line of policy which should be pursued with regard to America—he shewed that all proper plans of government must be adapted to the feelings, established habits, and received opinions of the people. On these principles he reprobated all plans of governing the Colonies by force; and proposed as the ground-work of his plan, that the Colonists should be admitted to an interest in the constitution. He then went into an historical detail of the manner in which British privileges had been extended to Ireland, Wales, and the counties palatine of Chester and Durham—the

March 22.

state

ſtate of confuſion previouſly to that event, and the happy 1775.
conſequences which followed it. He contended that a communication to the members of an intereſt in the conſtitution, was the great ruling principle of Britiſh government. He therefore propoſed to go back to the old policy for governing the Colonies. He was for a parliamentary acknowledgement of the legal competency of the Colony Aſſemblies for the ſupport of their government in peace, and for public aids in time of war—and of the futility of parliamentary taxation as a method of ſupply. He ſtated that much had been given in the old way of colonial grant, that from the year 1748 to 1763, the Journals of the Houſe of Commons repeatedly acknowledged that the Colonies not only gave, but gave to ſatiety; and that from the time in which parliamentary impoſition had ſuperſeded the free gifts of the provinces, there was much diſcontent but little revenue. He therefore moved ſix reſolutions affirmatory of theſe facts, and grounded on them reſolutions for repealing the acts complained of by the Americans, truſting to the liberality of their future voluntary contributions. This plan of conciliation, which promiſed immediate peace to the whole empire, and a laſting obedience of the Colonies, though recommended by the charms of the moſt perſuaſive eloquence, and ſupported by the moſt convincing arguments, was by a great majority rejected.

Mr. D. Hartley, not diſcouraged by the negative which Mar. 27.
had been given to Mr. Burke's ſcheme, came forward with another for the ſame purpoſe. This propoſed, that a letter of requiſition ſhould be ſent to the Colonies by a Secretary of State, on a motion from the Houſe for a contribution to the expences of the whole empire. He meant to leave to the provincial aſſemblies the right to judge of the expedience of the grant—its amount and application. In confidence that the Colonies would give freely when called on in this conſtitutional way, he moved to ſuſpend the acts complained of by the Americans. This was alſo rejected. Another plan, which ſhall be more particularly explained, was digeſted in private by Dr. Franklin on the part of the Americans, and Dr. Fothergill and David

Barclay

1775. Barclay on behalf of the British Ministry. There appeared a disposition to concede something considerable on both sides, but the whole came to nothing, in consequence of an inflexible determination to refuse a repeal of the act of Parliament for altering the chartered government of Massachusetts. Dr. Franklin agreed, that the tea destroyed should be paid for—the British Ministers, that the Boston port act should be repealed; but the latter contended, "that the late Massachusetts acts being real amendments of their constitution, must for that reason be continued as well as to be a standing example of the power of Parliament." On the other hand it was declared by Dr. Franklin, "that while the Parliament claimed and exercised a power of internal legislation for the Colonies, and of altering American constitutions at pleasure, there could be no agreement, as that would render the Americans unsafe in every privilege they enjoyed, and would leave them nothing in which they could be secure."

This obstinate adherence to support Parliament in a power of altering the laws and charters of the provinces, particularly to enforce their late laws for new-modelling the chartered constitution of Massachusetts, was the fatal rock by dashing on which the empire broke in twain; for every other point in dispute, between the two countries, seemed in a fair way for an amicable compromise.

The fishery bill was speedily followed by another, for restraining the trade and commerce of the Colonies and Provinces of New-Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, and South-Carolina: the reasons assigned for this were the same with those offered for the other. These provinces had adopted the continental association. The British Minister thought it proper, that as they had voluntarily interdicted themselves from trade with Great Britain, Ireland, and the West-Indies, they should be restrained from it with all other parts of the world. He contended that the inhabitants of the Colonies might render this act a dead letter, by relinquishing their own resolutions, as then they would meet with no restraint in carrying on trade in its ancient legal channel. It is remarkable, that three of the associated Colonies, viz. New-

York,

York, Delaware, and North-Carolina, were omitted in this restraining bill. Whatever might be the view of the British Ministry for this discrimination, it was considered in the Colonies as calculated to promote disunion among them. It is certain, that the Colonies which were exempted from its operation, might have reaped a golden harvest from the exemption in their favour, had they been disposed to avail themselves of it. But such was the temper of the times, that a renunciation of immediate advantage in favour of the public was fashionable. The selfish passions which in seasons of peace are too often the cause of quarrels, were hushed by the pressure of common danger. The exempted Colonies spurned the proffered favour, and submitted to the restraints imposed on their less favoured neighbours, so as to be equal sharers of their fate. The indulgence granted to New-York, in being kept out of this restraining bill, was considered by some as a premium for her superior loyalty. Her Assembly had refused to approve the proceedings of the Congress, and had, in some other instances, discovered less warmth than the neighbouring legislatures. Much was expected from her moderation. At the very time the British Parliament was framing the restraining acts just mentioned, the Constitutional Assembly of New-York petitioned the British Parliament for a redress of their grievances. Great stress had been laid on the circumstance that Congress was not a legal assembly, and the want of constitutional sanction had been assigned as a reason for the neglect with which their petition had been treated. Much praise had been lavished on the Colony of New-York for its moderation, and occasion had been taken from their refusing to approve the proceedings of the Congress, to represent the resolutions and claims of that body to be more the ebullitions of incendiaries, than the sober sentiments of the temperate citizens. It was both unexpected and confounding to those who supported these opinions, that the representation and remonstrance of the very loyal Assembly of New-York stated, "that an exemption from internal taxation, and the exclusive right of providing for their own civil government, and the administration of justice in the

1775.

1775. the Colony, were esteemed by them as their undoubted and unalienable rights."

A motion being made in the House of Commons for bringing up this representation and remonstrance of the Assembly of New-York, it was amended on the suggestion of Lord North, by adding, " in which the assembly claim to themselves rights derogatory to, and inconsistent with the legislative authority of Parliament, as declared by the declaratory act." The question so amended, being put, it passed the negative. The fate of this representation extinguished the hopes of those moderate persons, both in the parent state of the Colonies, who flattered themselves that the disputes subsisting between the two countries might be accommodated by the mediation of the Constitutional Assemblies. Two conclusions were drawn from this transaction, both of which were unfriendly to a reconciliation. The decided language with which the loyal Assembly of New-York claimed exemption from parliamentary taxation, proved to the people of Great Britain that the Colonists, however they might differ in modes of opposition, or in degrees of warmth, were, nevertheless, united in that fundamental principle. The rejection of their representation proved, that nothing more was to be expected from proceeding in the constitutional channel of the legal Assemblies, than from the new system of a Continental Congress. Solid revenue and unlimitted supremacy were the objects of Great Britain, and exemption from parliamentary taxation, that of the most moderate of the Colonies. So wide were the claims of the two countries from each other, that to reconcile them on any middle ground seemed to be impossible.

APPENDIX. No. I.

1775.

Some special transactions of Dr. Franklin in London, in behalf of America.

WHILE the breach between Great Britain and the Colonies was daily increasing, the enlightened and liberal, who loved peace, and the extension of human happiness, saw with regret the approaching horrors of a civil war, and wished to avert them. With these views, Dr. Fothergill, Mr. David Barclay, and Dr. Franklin, held sundry conferences in London on American affairs. The two former were English gentlemen of most amiable characters, and highly esteemed by the British Ministry; the last was by birth an American, but a citizen of the world, who loved and was beloved by all good men. He was also agent for several of the Colonies. At one of their conferences held at the house of Dr. Fothergill on the 4th December, 1774, before the proceedings of Congress had reached England, a paper, drawn up by the last at the request of the two first, was submitted to their joint consideration; which, with a few additions proposed and agreed to by common consent, was as follows:

Hints for conversation upon the subjects of terms that might probably produce a durable union between Britain and the Colonies.

1st. The tea destroyed to be paid for.

2d. The tea duty act to be repealed, and all the duties that have been received upon it to be repaid into the treasuries of the several provinces from which they have been collected.

3d. The acts of navigation to be all re-enacted in the Colonies.

4th. A naval officer to be appointed by the Crown to see that these acts are observed.

5th. All the acts restraining manufactories in the Colonists to be reconsidered.

6th. All duties arising on the acts for regulating trade with the Colonies, to be for the public use of the respective Colonies, and paid into their treasuries.

The

1775. The collectors and custom-house officers to be appointed by each Governor and not sent from England.

7th. In consideration of the Americans maintaining their own peace establishment, and the monopoly Britain is to have of their commerce, no requisition is to be made from them in time of peace.

8th. No troops to enter and quarter in any Colony, but with the consent of its legislature.

9th. In time of war, on requisition by the King with consent of Parliament, every Colony shall raise money by the following rules in proportion, viz. If Britain on account of the war, raises three shillings in the pound to its land tax, then the Colonies to add to their last general provincial peace tax, a sum equal to one fourth part thereof; and if Britain on the same account pays four shillings in the pound, then the Colonies to add to their last peace tax, a sum equal to the half thereof, which additional tax is to be granted to his Majesty, and to be employed in raising and paying men for land or sea service, and furnishing provisions, transports, or for such other purposes as the King shall require and direct; and though no Colony may contribute less, each may add as much by voluntary grant as it shall think proper.

10th. Castle William to be restored to the province of Massachusetts Bay, and no fortress to be built by the Crown in any province, but with the consent of its legislature.

11th. The late Massachusetts and Quebec acts to be repealed, and a free government granted to Canada.

12th. All judges to be appointed during good behaviour, with equally permanent salaries to be paid out of the province revenues by appointment of the Assemblies, or if the judges are to be appointed during the pleasure of the Crown, let the salaries be during the pleasure of the Assemblies as heretofore.

13th. Governors to be supported by the Assemblies of each province.

14th. If Britain will give up her monopoly of the American commerce, then the aid abovementioned to be given in time of peace, as well as in time of war.

15th. The extenſion of the act of Henry VIII. concerning treaſons to the Colonies, to be formally diſowned by Parliament. 1775.

16th. The American admiralty courts to be reduced to the ſame powers they have in England, and the acts eſtabliſhing them to be re-enacted in America.

17th. All power of internal legiſlation in the Colonies to be diſclaimed by Parliament.

On reading this paper a ſecond time, Dr. Franklin gave his reaſons at length for each article. Some of his reaſons were as follow:

On the firſt article he obſerved, that when the tea was deſtroyed at Boſton, Great Britain had a right to reparation, and would certainly have had it on demand, as was the caſe when injuries were done by mobs in the time of the ſtamp act, or ſhe might have a right to return an equal injury, if ſhe rather choſe to do that; but Great Britain could not have a right both to reparation and to return an equal injury, much leſs had ſhe a right to return the injury ten or twenty fold, as ſhe had done by blocking up the port of Boſton. All which extra injury ought to be repaired by Great Britain. That therefore if paying for the tea was agreed to, as an article fit to be propoſed, it was merely from a deſire of peace, and in compliance with the opinions of Dr. Fothergill and David Barclay, expreſſed at their firſt meeting;—that this was indiſpenſable, that the dignity of Great Britain required it, and that if this was agreed to, every thing elſe would be eaſy.

On the ſecond, it was obſerved that the tea duty act ſhould be repealed, as having never anſwered any good purpoſe, as having been the cauſe of the preſent miſchief, and never likely to be executed. That the act being conſidered as unconſtitutional by the Americans, and what Parliament had no right to enact, they muſt conſider all the money extorted by it as ſo much wrongfully taken, and of which therefore reſtitution ought to be made, and the rather, as it would furniſh a fund out of which the tea deſtroyed would be beſt defrayed.

On the third and fourth articles it was obſerved, that the Americans were frequently charged with views of abo-

1775. abolishing the navigation act, but that in truth those parts of it which were of most importance to Britain, as tending to increase its naval strength, were as acceptable to the Colonists as they could be to the inhabitants of the Parent State, since they wished to employ their own ships in preference to those of foreigners, and they had no desire to see foreign ships enter their ports. That it would prevent disputes if they were re-enacted in the Colonies, as that would demonstrate their consent to them; and then, if all the duties arising on them were to be collected by officers appointed and paid in the respective governments, and the produce paid into their treasuries, the acts would be better and more faithfully executed, and at much less expence, and a great source of misunderstanding between the two countries removed—that the extension of the admiralty jurisdiction, so much complained of, would then no longer be necessary,

In support of the 7th article it was observed, that if every distinct part of the King's dominions supported its own government in time of peace, it was all that could justly be required of it.—That all the old and confederated Colonies had done so from their beginning, that their taxes for that purpose were very considerable, that new countries had many expences which old ones were free from, the work being done to their hand by their ancestors, such as making roads and bridges, erecting churches, court-houses, forts, quays, and other public buildings, founding schools and places of education, hospitals and almshouses---that the voluntary subscriptions and legal taxes for such purposes taken together amounted to more than was paid by equal estates in Great Britain; that it would be best not to take money from the Americans as a contribution to its public expence in time of peace; first, for that just so much less would be got from them in commerce; and secondly, that coming into the hands of British Ministers accustomed to prodigality of public money, it would be squandered and dissipated without answering any general good purposes. That on the whole it would be best for both countries, that no aids should be asked from the Colonies in time of peace, that

that it would then be their intereſt to grant bountifully, and exert themſelves in time of war, the ſooner to put an end to it. 1775.

In ſupport of the 8th article it was ſaid, that if the King could bring into any one part of his dominions, troops raiſed in any other part of them, without the conſent of the legiſlature of the part to which they were brought, he might bring armies raiſed in America to England without the conſent of Parliament.

The 9th article was drawn in compliance with an idea of Dr. Fothergill, that the Britiſh Government would probably not be ſatisfied with the promiſe of voluntary grants in time of war from the American Aſſemblies, of which the quantity muſt be uncertain, that therefore it would be beſt to proportion them in ſome way to the ſhilling in the pound raiſed in England.

In ſupport of the 10th article was urged, the injuſtice of ſeizing that fortreſs which had been built at an immenſe charge by the province, for the defence of their port againſt national enemies, and turning it into a citadel for awing the town, reſtraining their trade, blocking up their port, and depriving them of their privileges. That a great deal had been ſaid of their injuſtice in deſtroying the tea, but here was a much greater injuſtice uncompenſated, that caſtle having coſt the province £.300,000.

In ſupport of the 11th article it was ſaid, that as the Americans had aſſiſted in the conqueſt of Canada, at a great expence of blood and treaſure, they had ſome right to be conſidered in the ſettlement of it; that the eſtabliſhing an arbitrary government on the bank of their ſettlements would be dangerous to them all; that as to amending the Maſſachuſetts government, though it might be ſhewn that every one of theſe pretended amendments were real miſchiefs, yet, that as charters were compacts between two parties, the King and the people, no alteration could be made in them even for the better, but by the conſent of both parties; that the parliamentary claim and exerciſe of power to alter American charters had rendered all their conſtitutions uncertain, and ſet them quite

1775. quite afloat; that by this claim of altering laws and charters at will, they deprived the Colonists of all rights and privileges whatever, but what they should hold at their pleasure; that this was a situation they could not be in, and must risk life and every thing rather than submit to it.

The 12th article was explained by stating the former situation of the judges in most of the Colonies, viz. that they were appointed by the Crown and paid by the Assemblies; that the appointment being during the pleasure of the Crown, the salary had been during the pleasure of the Assembly; that when it was urged against the Assemblies that their making judges dependent on them for their salaries, was aiming at an undue influence over the courts of justice, the Assemblies usually replied, that making them dependent on the Crown for continuance in their places, was also retaining an undue influence over those courts, and that one undue influence was a proper balance for another; but that whenever the Crown would consent to the appointment of judges only during good behaviour, the Assemblies would at the same time grant their salaries to be permanent during their continuance in office; that instead of agreeing to this equitable offer, the Crown now claimed to make the judges in the Colonies dependent on its favour for place, as well as salary, and both to be continued at its pleasure. This the Colonies must oppose as inequitable, as putting both the weights into one of the scales of justice.

In favour of the 13th it was urged, that the governors sent to the Colonies were often men of no estate or principle, who came merely to make fortunes, and had no natural regard for the country they were to govern; that to make them quite independent of the people, was to make them careless of their conduct, and giving a loose to their rapacious and oppressive dispositions; that the dependance of the governors on the people for their salaries could never operate to the prejudice of the King's service, or to the disadvantage of Britain, since each governor was bound by a particular set of instructions which he had given surety to observe, and all the laws he assented

to

to were ſubject to be repealed by the Crown; that the payment of the ſalaries by the people was more ſatisfactory to them, and was productive of a good underſtanding between governors and governed, and that therefore the innovations lately made at Boſton and New-York ſhould be laid aſide. 1775.

The 14th article was expunged on the repreſentation of Dr. Fothergill and David Barclay, that the monopoly of the American commerce would never be given up, and that the propoſing of it would only give offence, without anſwering any good purpoſe.

The 15th article was readily agreed to.

The 16th was thought to be of little conſequence, if the duties were given to the Colony treaſuries.

The 17th it was thought could hardly be obtained; but it was ſupported by Dr. Franklin, alledging that without it, any compact made with the Americans might be evaded by acts of the Britiſh Parliament, reſtraining the intermediate proceedings which were neceſſary for carrying it into effect.

This paper of hints was communicated to Lord Dartmouth by Dr. Fothergill, who alſo ſtated the arguments which in converſation had been offered in ſupport of them. When objections were made to them, as being humiliating to Great Britain, Dr. Fothergill replied, "that ſhe had been unjuſt, and ought to bear the conſequences, and alter her conduct—that the pill might be bitter, but it would be ſalutary and muſt be ſwallowed; that ſooner or later theſe or ſimilar meaſures muſt be followed, or the empire would be divided and ruined."

Theſe hints were handed about among Miniſters, and conferences were held on them. The reſult was on the 4th of February 1775 communicated to Dr. Franklin, in the preſence of Dr. Fothergill and David Barclay, which, as far as concerned the leading articles, was as follows:

1. The firſt article was approved.

2. The ſecond agreed to ſo far as related to the tea act, but repayment of the duties that had been collected was refuſed.

3. The third not approved, as it implied a deficiency of power in the Parliament that made the acts.

 4. The

1775. 4. The fourth approved.

5. The fifth agreed to, but with a reserve that no change prejudicial to Britain was to be expected.

6. The sixth agreed to, so far as related to the appropriation of the duties, but the appointment of the officers and their salaries to remain as at present.

7. The seventh, relating to aids in time of war, agreed to.

8. The eighth, relating to troops, was inadmissible.

9. The ninth could be agreed to with this difference, that no proportion should be observed with regard to preceding taxes, but each Colony should give at pleasure.

10. The tenth agreed to as to the restitution of Castle William, but the restriction on the Crown in building fortresses refused.

11. The elventh refused absolutely, except as to the Boston port bill which would be repealed, and the Quebec act might be so far amended, as to reduce that province to its ancient limits. The other MASSACHUSETTS ACTS BEING REAL AMENDMENTS OF THEIR CONSTITUTION, MUST FOR THAT REASON BE CONTINUED, AS WELL AS TO BE A STANDING EXAMPLE OF THE POWER OF PARLIAMENT.

12. The twelfth agreed to, that the judges should be appointed during good behaviour, on the Assemblies providing permanent salaries, such as the Crown should approve of.

13. The thirteenth agreed to, provided the Assemblies make provision, as in the preceding article.

15. The fifteenth agreed to.

16. The sixteenth agreed to, supposing the duties paid to the Colony treasuries.

17. The seventeenth inadmissible.

At this interview the conversation was shortened by Dr. Franklin's observing, that while the Parliament claimed and exercised a power of internal legislation for the Colonies, and of altering American constitutions at pleasure, there could be no agreement, as that would render the Americans unsafe in every privilege they enjoyed, and

and would leave them nothing in which they could be secure. It being hinted how neceſſary an agreement was for America, ſince it was ſo eaſy for Britain to burn all her ſea-port towns, Dr. Franklin replied, "that the chief part of his little property conſiſted of houſes in ſuch towns, that they might make bonfires of them whenever they pleaſed; that the fear of loſing them would never alter his reſolution of reſiſting to the laſt extremity that claim of Parliament, and that it behoved Great Britain to take care what miſchief ſhe did to America, for that ſooner or later ſhe would certainly be obliged to make good all damages with intereſt." 1775.

On the 16th of February, 1775, the three before-mentioned gentlemen met, when a paper was produced by David Barclay, entitled, "A plan which it is believed would produce a permanent union between Great Britain and her Colonies. This, in the firſt article, propoſed a repeal of the tea act, on payment being made for the tea deſtroyed. Dr. Franklin agreed to the firſt part, but contended that all the other Maſſachuſetts acts ſhould alſo be repealed; but this was deemed inadmiſſible. Dr. Franklin declared, that the people of Maſſachuſetts would ſuffer all the hazards and miſchiefs of war, rather than admit the alteration of their charters and laws by Parliament. He was for ſecuring the unity of the empire, by recognizing the ſanctity of charters, and by leaving the provinces to govern themſelves in their internal concerns, but the Britiſh Miniſtry could not brook the idea of relinquiſhing their claim to internal legiſlation for the Colonies, and eſpecially to alter and amend their charters. The firſt was for communicating the vital principles of liberty to the provinces, but the latter, though diſpoſed to redreſs a few of their exiſting grievances, would by no means conſent to a repeal of the late act of Parliament for altering the chartered government of Maſſachuſetts, and leaſt of all to renounce all claim to future amendments of charters, or of internal legiſlation for the Colonies.

Dr. Franklin laboured hard to prevent the breach from becoming irreparable, and candidly ſtated the outlines

1775. lines of a compact which he supposed would procure a durable union of the two countries, but his well meant endeavours proved abortive, and in the mean-time he was abused as the fomenter of those disturbances which he was anxiously endeavouring to prevent. That the Ministry might have some opening to proceed upon, and some salvo for their personal honour, he was disposed to engage, that pecuniary compensation should be made for the tea destroyed, but he would not give up essential liberty, for the purpose of procuring temporary safety. Finding the Ministry bent on war, unless the Colonists would consent to hold their rights, liberties, and charters, at the discretion a British Parliament, and well knowing that his countrymen would hazard every thing, rather than consent to terms so degrading as well as inconsistent with the spirit of the British constitution, he quitted Great Britain in March 1775, and returned to Philadelphia. Dr. Fothergill, his worthy coadjutor in the great business of peace, wrote to him on the evening before he left London. "That whatever specious pretences were offered, they were all hollow, and that to get a larger field on which to fatten a herd of worthless parasites, was all that was intended." With this conviction, founded on personal observations, as well as the testimony of his esteemed friend, who, in the course of his daily visits among the great, in the practice of his profession, had an opportunity of knowing their undisguised sentiments, Dr. Franklin joined his countrymen, and exerted his great abilities in conducting them through a war he had in vain laboured to prevent.

CHAP. VI.

Consequences in America, resulting from the preceding Transactions of Parliament; and of the Commencement of Hostilities.

THE year 1774 terminated in America with an expectation that a few months would bring them a redress of their grievances; but the probability of that event daily

daily diminiſhed. The Coloniſts had indulged themſelves in an expectation that the people of Great Britain, from a conſideration of the dangers and difficulties of a war with the Colonies, would in their election have preferred thoſe who were friends to peace and a reconciliation; but when they were convinced of the fallacy of theſe hopes, they turned their attention to the means of ſelf-defence. It had been the reſolution of many never to ſubmit to the operation of the late acts of Parliament. Their number daily increaſed, and in the ſame proportion that Great Britain determined to enforce, did they determine to oppoſe. Intelligence of the rejection of Lord Chatham's bill, of the addreſs of both Houſes of Parliament to the King on the 9th of February, and of the fiſhery bill, all arrived among the Coloniſts about the ſame time, and diminiſhed what remained of their firſt hopes of a ſpeedy accommodation. The fiſhery bill excited a variety of emotions. The obvious tendency of it was to ſtarve thouſands. The ſeverity of it did not ſtrike an Engliſhman, for he viewed it as a merited correction for great provincial offences; but it appeared in the blackeſt colours to an American, who felt no conſciouſneſs of guilt, and who fancied that Heaven approved his zeal in defence of liberty. It alienated the affections of the Coloniſts, and produced in the breaſts of thouſands a hatred of Great Britain. 1775.

The penal acts of Parliament in 1774 were all levelled againſt Maſſachuſetts, but the fiſhery bill extended to New-Hampſhire, Connecticut, and Rhode-Iſland. The reaſons aſſigned for this by Lord North were, that they had aided and abetted their offending neighbours, and were ſo near to them, that the intentions of Parliament would be fruſtrated, unleſs they were in like manner comprehended in the propoſed reſtraints. The extenſion of this penal ſtatute to three additional provinces, operated powerfully in favour of union, and convinced the moſt moderate, of the increaſing neceſſity for all the provinces to make a common cauſe of their oppoſition. Whatever might be the deſigns of Parliament, their acts had a natural tendency to enlarge the demands of the Americans, and

1775. and to cement their confederacy, by firm principles of union. At firſt they only claimed exemption from internal taxation, but by the combination of the Eaſt India Company and the Britiſh Miniſtry, an external tax was made to anſwer all the purpoſes of a direct internal tax. They therefore, in conſiſtence with their own principles, were conſtrained to deny the right of taxing in any form for a ſupply. Nothing could more contribute to make the Coloniſts deny the parliamentary claim of internal legiſlation, than the manner in which it was exerciſed, in depriving them of their charters, and paſſing an act relative to trials, which promiſed indemnity to murderers. This convinced them that an oppoſition to ſo injurious a claim was eſſentially neceſſary to their ſecurity. But they ſtill admitted the power of Parliament to bind their trade. This was conceded by Congreſs but a few months before an act paſſed that they ſhould have no foreign trade, nor be allowed to fiſh on their own coaſts. The Britiſh Miniſtry by their ſucceſſive acts impelled the Coloniſts to believe, that while the Mother Country retained any authority over them, that authority would, in ſome ſhape or other, be exerted ſo as to anſwer all the purpoſes of a power to tax. While Great Britain ſtretched that portion of controlling ſupremacy which the Coloniſts were diſpoſed to allow her, to ſuch an extent as covered oppreſſion equally grievous with that which they would not allow, the way was faſt opening for a total renunciation of her ſovereignty. The coercive meaſures adopted by the Parent State produced a diſpoſition in the Colonies to extend their claims, and the extenſion of their claims produced an increaſing diſpoſition in Great Britain to coerce them ſtill more. The jealouſy of liberty on one ſide, and the deſire of ſupremacy on the other, were reciprocally cauſe and effect; and urged both parties, the one to riſe in her demands, and the other to enforce ſubmiſſion. In the conteſt between Great Britain and her Colonies, there had been a fatal progreſſion from ſmall to greater grounds of diſſention. The trifling tax of 3d. per pound on tea, rouſed the jealous inhabitants of Boſton to throw 340 cheſts of it into the ocean. This

This provoked the British Parliament to shut up their port, and to new-model their charter. Statutes so unconstitutional and alarming excited a combination in twelve of the Colonies, to stop all trade with Great Britain, Ireland, and the West-Indies. Their combination gave birth to the restraining acts of Parliament, by which nine of the Colonies were interdicted all other trade but that from which they had voluntarily excluded themselves; and four of these nine were farther devoted to famine, by being forbidden to fish on their coasts. Each new resolution on the one side, and new act on the other, reciprocally gave birth to something from the opposite party, that was more irritating or oppressive, than what had preceded. 1775.

The beginning of strife between the Parent State and her Colonies was like the letting out of waters. From inconsiderable causes love was changed into suspicion that gradually ripened into ill will, and soon ended in hostility. Prudence, policy, and reciprocal interest, urged the expediency of concession; but pride, false honour, and misconceived dignity, drew in an opposite direction. Undecided claims and doubtful rights, which under the influence of wisdom and humility might have been easily compromised, imperceptibly widened into an irreconcileable breach. Hatred at length took the place of kind affections, and the calamities of war were substituted in lieu of the benefits of commerce.

From the year 1768, in which a military force had been stationed in Boston, there was a constant succession of insulting words, looks, and gestures. The inhabitants were exasperated against the soldiers, and they against the inhabitants. The former looked on the latter as the instruments of tyranny, and the latter on the former as seditious rioters, or fraudulent smugglers. In this irritable state, every incident, however trifling, made a sensible impression. The citizens apprehended constant danger from an armed force, in whose power they were; the soldiers, on the other hand, considered themselves as in the midst of enemies, and exposed to attacks from within and from without. In proportion as

1775. as the breach between Great Britain and her Colonies widened, the diſtruſt and animoſity between the people and the army increaſed. From the latter end of 1774, hoſtile appearances daily threatened that the flames of war would be kindled from the colliſion of ſuch inflammable materials. Whatſoever was done by either party by way of precaution, for the purpoſes of ſelf-defence, was conſtrued by the other as preparatory to an intended attack. Each diſclaimed all intentions of commencing hoſtilities, but reciprocally manifeſted ſuſpicion of the other's ſincerity. As far as was practicable without an open rupture, the plans of the one were reſpectively thwarted by the other. From every appearance it became daily more evident that arms muſt ultimately decide the conteſt. To ſuffer an army that was ſoon expected to be an enemy, quietly to fortify themſelves, when the inhabitants were both able and willing to cut them off, appeared to ſome warm ſpirits the height of folly; but the prudence and moderation of others, and eſpecially the advice and recommendation of Congreſs, reſtrained their impetuoſity. It was a fortunate circumſtance for the Colonies that the royal army was poſted in New-England. The people of that northern country have their paſſions more under the command of reaſon and intereſt, than in the ſouthern latitudes, where a warmer ſun excites a greater degree of iraſcibility. One raſh offenſive action againſt the royal forces at this early period, though ſucceſsful, might have done great miſchief to the cauſe of America. It would have loſt them European friends, and weakened the diſpoſition of the other Colonies to aſſiſt them. The patient and the politic New-England men, fully ſenſible of their ſituation, ſubmitted to many inſults, and bridled their reſentment. In civil wars or revolutions, it is a matter of much conſequence who ſtrikes the firſt blow. The compaſſion of the world is in favour of the attacked, and the diſpleaſure of good men on thoſe who are the firſt to imbrue their hands in human blood. For the ſpace of nine months after the arrival of General Gage, the behaviour of the people of Boſton is particularly worthy of imitation, by thoſe who wiſh to

overturn eſtabliſhed governments. They conducted their opposition with exquiſite addreſs. They avoided every kind of outrage and violence, preſerved peace and good order among themſelves, ſucceſsfully engaged the other Colonies to make a common cauſe with them, and counteracted General Gage ſo effectually as to prevent his doing any thing for his royal maſter, while by patience and moderation they ſkreened themſelves from cenſure. Though reſolved to bear as long as prudence and policy dictated, they were all the time preparing for the laſt extremity. They were furniſhing themſelves with arms and ammunition, and training their militia. 1775.

Proviſions were alſo collected and ſtored in different places, particularly at Concord, about 20 miles from Boſton. General Gage, though zealous for his royal maſter's intereſt, diſcovered a prevailing deſire after a peaceable accommodation. He wiſhed to prevent hoſtilities by depriving the inhabitants of the means neceſſary for carrying them on. With this view he determined to deſtroy the ſtores which he knew were collected for the ſupport of a provincial army. Wiſhing to accompliſh this without bloodſhed, he took every precaution to effect it by ſurpriſe, and without alarming the country. At eleven o'clock at night 800 grenadiers and light infantry, April 18. the flower of the royal army, embarked at the Common, landed at Phipps's farm, and marched for Concord, under the command of Lieutenant-colonel Smith. Neither the ſecrecy with which this expedition was planned, the privacy with which the troops marched out, nor an order that no one inhabitant ſhould leave Boſton, were ſufficient to prevent intelligence from being ſent to the country militia, of what was going on. About two in the morning 130 of the Lexington militia had aſſembled to oppoſe them, but the air being chilly and intelligence reſpecting the regulars uncertain, they were diſmiſſed, with orders to appear again at beat of drum. They collected a ſecond time to the number of 70, between four and five o'clock in the morning, and the Britiſh regulars ſoon after made their appearance. Major Pitcairn, who led the advanced corps, rode up to them and called out, "Diſperſe, you rebels;

1775. rebels; throw down your arms and diſperſe." They ſtill continued in a body, on which he advanced nearer—diſcharged his piſtol—and ordered his ſoldiers to fire. This was done with a huzza. A diſperſion of the militia was the conſequence, but the firing of the regulars was nevertheleſs continued. Individuals finding they were fired upon, though diſperſing, returned the fire: Three or four of the militia were killed on the green; a few more were ſhot after they had begun to diſperſe. The royal detachment proceeded on to Concord, and executed their commiſſion. They diſabled two 24 pounders—threw 500lb. of ball into rivers and wells, and broke in pieces about 60 barrels of flour. Mr. John Butterick of Concord, major of a minute regiment, not knowing what had paſſed at Lexington, ordered his men not to give the firſt fire, that they might not be the aggreſſors. Upon his approaching near the regulars, they fired, and killed Captain Iſaac Davis, and one private of the provincial minute men. The fire was returned, and a ſkirmiſh enſued. The King's troops having done their buſineſs, began their retreat towards Boſton. This was conducted with expedition, for the adjacent inhabitants had aſſembled in arms, and began to attack them in every direction. In their return to Lexington they were exceedingly annoyed, both by thoſe who preſſed on their rear, and others, who pouring in on all ſides, fired from behind ſtone walls, and ſuch like coverts, which ſupplied the place of lines and redoubts. At Lexington the regulars were joined by a detachment of 900 men, under Lord Piercy, which had been ſent out by General Gage to ſupport Lieutenant-colonel Smith. This reinforcement having two pieces of cannon awed the provincials, and kept them at a greater diſtance, but they continued a conſtant, though irregular and ſcattering fire, which did great execution. The cloſe firing from behind the walls by good markſmen, put the regular troops in no ſmall confuſion, but they nevertheleſs kept up a briſk retreating fire on the militia and minute men. A little after ſunſet the regulars reached Bunker's Hill, worn down with exceſſive fatigue, having marched that day between thirty and forty miles. On

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the next day they crossed Charlestown ferry, and returned to Boston. 1775.

There never were more than 400 provincials engaged at one time, and often not so many; as some tired and gave out, others came up and took their places. There was scarcely any discipline observed among them: officers and privates fired when they were ready, and saw a royal uniform, without waiting for the word of command. Their knowledge of the country enabled them to gain opportunities by crossing fields and fences, and to act as flanking parties against the King's troops who kept to the main road.

The regulars had 65 killed, 180 wounded, and 28 made prisoners. Of the provincials 50 were killed, and 38 wounded and missing.

As arms were to decide the controversy, it was fortunate for the Americans that the first blood was drawn in New-England. The inhabitants of that country are so connected with each other by descent, manners, religion, politics, and a general equality, that the killing of a single individual interested the whole, and made them consider it as a common a cause. The blood of those who were killed at Lexington and Concord proved the firm cement of an extensive union.

To prevent the people within Boston from co-operating with their countrymen without in case of an assault, which was now daily expected, General Gage agreed with a committee of the town, that upon the inhabitants lodging their arms in Faneuil-hall, or any other convenient place, under the care of the select men, all such inhabitants as were inclined, might depart from the town, with their families and effects. In five days after the ratification of this agreement, the inhabitants had lodged 1778 fire arms, 634 pistols, 273 bayonets, and 38 blunderbusses. The agreement was well observed in the beginning, but after a short time obstructions were thrown in the way of its final completion, on the plea that persons who went from Boston to bring in the goods of those who chose to continue within the town, were not properly treated. Congress remonstrated on the infraction of the April 22.

1775. the agreement, but without effect. The General, on a farther consideration of the consequences of moving the whigs out of Boston, evaded it in a manner not consistent with good faith. He was in some measure compelled to adopt this dishonourable measure, from the clamour of the tories, who alledged, that none but enemies to the British government were disposed to remove, and that when they were all safe with their families and effects, the town would be set on fire. To prevent the provincials from obtaining supplies which they much wanted, a quibble was made on the meaning of the word effects, which was construed by the General as not including merchandize. By this construction, unwarranted by every rule of genuine interpretation, many who quitted the town were deprived of their usual resources for a support. Passports were not universally refused, but were given out very slowly, and the business was so conducted that families were divided,—wives were separated from their husbands, children from their parents, and the aged and infirm from their relations and friends. The General discovered a disinclination to part with the women and children, thinking that, on their account, the provincials would be restrained from making an assault on the town. The select-men gave repeated assurances that the inhabitants had delivered up their arms, but as a cover for violating the agreement, General Gage issued a proclamation, in which he asserted that he had full proof to the contrary. A few might have secreted some favourite arms, but nearly all the training arms were delivered up. On this flimsy pretence the General sacrificed his honour, to policy and the clamours of the tories. Contrary to good faith he detained many, though fairly entitled by agreement to go out, and when he admitted the departure of others he would not allow them to move their families and effects.

The Provincial Congress of Massachusetts, which was in session at the time of the Lexington battle, dispatched an account of it to Great Britain, accompanied with many depositions, to prove that the British troops were the aggressors. They also made an address to the inhabitants

bitants of Great Britain, in which, after complaining of their ſufferings, they ſay, "theſe have not yet detached us from our royal Sovereign; we profeſs to be his loyal and dutiful ſubjects, and though hardly dealt with, as we have been, are ſtill ready with our lives and fortunes, to defend his perſon, crown, and dignity; nevertheleſs, to the perſecution and tyranny of his evil Miniſtry, we will not tamely ſubmit. Appealing to Heaven for the juſtice of our cauſe, we determine to die or be free." From the commencement of hoſtilities, the diſpute between Great Britain and the Colonies took a new direction. 1775.

Intelligence that the Britiſh troops had marched out of Boſton into the country on ſome hoſtile purpoſe, being forwarded by expreſſes from one committee to another, great bodies of the militia, not only from Maſſachuſetts but the adjacent Colonies, graſped their arms and marched to oppoſe them. The Colonies were in ſuch a ſtate of irritability, that the leaſt ſhock in any part was, by a powerful and ſympathetic affection, inſtantaneouſly felt throughout the whole. The Americans who fell were revered by their countrymen, as martyrs who had died in the cauſe of liberty. Reſentment againſt the Britiſh burned more ſtrongly than ever. Martial rage took poſſeſſion of the breaſts of thouſands. Combinations were formed and aſſociations ſubſcribed, binding the inhabitants to one another by the ſacred ties of honour, religion, and love of country, to do whatever their public bodies directed for the preſervation of their liberties. Hitherto the Americans had no regular army. From principles of policy they cautiouſly avoided that meaſure, leſt they might ſubject themſelves to the charge of being aggreſſors. All their military regulations were carried on by their militia, and under the old eſtabliſhed laws of the land. For the defence of the Colonies, the inhabitants had been, from their early years, enrolled in companies, and taught the uſe of arms. The laws for this purpoſe had never been better obſerved than for ſome months previous to the Lexington battle. Theſe military arrangements, which had been previouſly adopted for defending the Colonies from hoſtile French and Indians,

1775. dians, were on this occaſion turned againſt the troops of the Parent State. Forts, magazines, and arſenals, by the conſtitution of the country, were in the keeping of his Majeſty. Immediately after the Lexington battle. theſe were for the moſt part taken poſſeſſion of throughout the Colonies, by parties of the provincial militia, Ticonderoga, in which was a ſmall royal garriſon, was ſurpriſed and taken by adventurers from different ſtates. Public money which had been collected in conſequence of previous grants, was alſo ſeized for common ſervices. Before the commencement of hoſtilities theſe meaſures would have been condemned by the moderate even among the Americans, but that event juſtified a bolder line of oppoſition than had been adopted. Sundry citizens having been put to death by Britiſh troops, ſelf-preſervation dictated meaſures which, if adopted under other circumſtances, would have diſunited the Coloniſts. One of the moſt important of this kind was the raiſing an army. Men of warm tempers, whoſe courage exceeded their prudence, had for months urged the neceſſity of raiſing troops; but they were reſtrained by the more moderate, who wiſhed that the Colonies might avoid extremities, or at leaſt that they might not lead in bringing them on. The Provincial Congreſs of Maſſachuſetts being in ſeſſion at the time the battle of Lexington was fought, voted that " an army of 30,000 men be immediately raiſed, that 13,600 be of their own province, and that a letter and delegate be ſent to the ſeveral Colonies of New-Hampſhire, Connecticut, and Rhode-Iſland. In conſequence of this vote, the buſineſs of recruiting was begun, and in a ſhort time a provincial army was paraded in the vicinity of Boſton, which, though far below what had been voted by the Provincial Congreſs, was much ſuperior in numbers to the royal army. The command of this force was given to General Ward.

Had the Britiſh troops confined themſelves to Boſton, as before the 18th of April, the aſſembling an American army, though only for the purpoſe of obſervation and defence, would have appeared in the nature of a challenge, and would have made many leſs willing to ſupport

port the people of Maſſachuſetts, but after the Britiſh had commenced hoſtilities the ſame meaſure was adopted, without ſubjecting the authors of it to cenſure, and without giving offence or hazarding the union. The Lexington battle not only furniſhed the Americans with a juſtifying apology for raiſing an army, but inſpired them with ideas of their own proweſs. Amidſt the moſt animated declarations of ſacrificing fortune, and riſquing life itſelf for the ſecurity of American rights, a ſecret ſigh would frequently eſcape from the breaſts of her moſt determined friends, for fear that they could not ſtand before the bravery and diſcipline of Britiſh troops. Hoary ſages would ſhake their heads and ſay, "Your cauſe is good and I wiſh you ſucceſs, but I fear that your undiſciplined valour muſt be overcome in the unequal conteſt. After a few thouſands of you have fallen, the Provinces muſt ultimately bow to that power which has ſo repeatedly humbled France and Spain." So confident were the Britiſh of their ſuperiority in arms, that they ſeemed deſirous that the conteſt might be brought to a military deciſion. Some of the diſtinguiſhed ſpeakers in Parliament had publicly aſſerted that the natives of America had nothing of the ſoldier in them, and that they were in no reſpect qualified to face a Britiſh army. European philoſophers had publiſhed theories, ſetting forth that not only vegetables and beaſts, but that even men degenerated in the weſtern hemiſphere. Departing from the ſpirit of true philoſophy, they overlooked the ſtate of ſociety in a new world, and charged a comparative inferiority on every production that was American. The Coloniſts themſelves had imbibed opinions from their forefathers, that no people on earth were equal to thoſe with whom they were about to contend. Impreſſed with high ideas of Britiſh ſuperiority, and diffident of themſelves, their beſt informed citizens, though willing to run all riſques, feared the conſequence of an appeal to arms. The ſucceſs that attended their firſt military enterprize in ſome degree baniſhed theſe ſuggeſtions. Perhaps in no ſubſequent battle did the Americans appear to greater advantage than in their firſt eſſay at Lexington. It is almoſt

1775.

1775. without parallel in military hiſtory, for the yeomanry of the country to come forward in a ſingle disjointed manner, without order, and for the moſt part without officers, and by an irregular fire to put to flight troops equal in diſcipline to any in the world. In oppoſition to the bold aſſertions of ſome, and the deſponding fears of others, experience proved that Americans might effectually reſiſt Britiſh troops. The diffident grew bold in their country's cauſe, and indulged in cheerful hopes that Heaven would finally crown their labours with ſucceſs.

Soon after the Lexington battle, and in conſequence of that event, not only the arms, ammunition, forts, and fortifications, in the Colonies were ſecured for the uſe of the provincials, but regular forces were raiſed, and money ſtruck for their ſupport. Theſe military arrangements were not confined to the New-England ſtates, but were general throughout the Colonies. The determination of the King and Parliament to enforce ſubmiſſion to their acts, and the news of the Lexington battle, came to the diſtant provinces nearly about the ſame time. It was ſuppoſed by many that the latter was in conſequence of the former, and that General Gage had recent orders to proceed immediately to ſubdue the refractory Coloniſts.

From a variety of circumſtances the Americans had good reaſon to conclude that hoſtilities would ſoon be carried on vigorouſly in Maſſachuſetts, and alſo to apprehend that, ſooner or later, each province would be the theatre of war. "The more ſpeedily, therefore, ſaid they, we are prepared for that event, the better chance we have for defending ourſelves." Previous to this period, or rather to the 19th of April 1775, the diſpute had been carried on by the pen, or at moſt by aſſociations and legiſlative acts; but from this time forward it was conducted by the ſword. The criſis was arrived when the Colonies had no alternative, but either to ſubmit to the mercy, or to reſiſt the power of Great Britain. An unconquerable love of liberty could not brook the idea of ſubmiſſion, while reaſon, more temperate in her deciſions, ſuggeſted to the people their inſufficiency to make effectual oppoſition. They were fully apprized of the power

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1775.

of Britain—they knew that her fleets covered the ocean, and that her flag had waved in triumph through the four quarters of the globe; but the animated language of the time was, "It is better to die freemen than to live slaves." Though the justice of their cause, and the inspiration of liberty gave, in the opinion of disinterested judges, a superiority to the writings of Americans, yet in the latter mode of conducting their opposition, the candid among themselves acknowledged an inferiority. Their form of government was deficient in that decision, dispatch, and coercion, which are necessary in military operations.

Europeans, from their being generally unacquainted with fire arms, are less easily taught the use of them than Americans, who are from their youth familiar with these instruments of war; yet on other accounts they are more susceptible of military habits. The proportion of necessitous men in the new world is small to that in the old.

To procure subsistence is a powerful motive with an European to enlist, and the prospect of losing it makes him afraid to neglect his duty; but these incitements to the punctual discharge of military services are wanting in America. In old countries the distinction of ranks and the submission of inferiors to superiors, generally takes place, but in the new world an extreme sense of liberty and equality indisposes to that implicit obedience which is the soul of an army. The same causes which nurtured a spirit of independence in the Colonies, were hostile to their military arrangements. It was not only from the different state of society in the two countries, but from a variety of local causes, that the Americans were not able to contend in arms, on equal terms, with their Parent State. From the first settlement of the British Colonies, agriculture and commerce, but especially the former, had been the favourite pursuits of their inhabitants. War was a business abhorrent from their usual habits of life. They had never engaged in it from their own motion, nor in any other mode than as appendages to British troops, and under British establishments. By these means the military spirit of the Colonists had no opportunity of expanding itself. At the commencement of

1775. hoſtilities, the Britiſh troops poſſeſſed a knowledge of the ſcience and diſcipline of war, which could be acquired only by a long ſeries of application and ſubſtantial eſtabliſhments. Their equipments, their artillery, and every other part of their apparatus for war approached perfection. To theſe important circumſtances was added a high national ſpirit of pride, which had been greatly augmented by their ſucceſſes in their laſt conteſt with France and Spain. On the other hand the Americans were undiſciplined, without experienced officers, and without the ſhadow of military eſtabliſhments. In the wars which had been previouſly carried on, in or near the Colonies, the provincials had been, by their reſpective legiſlatures, frequently added to the Britiſh troops, but the pride of the latter would not conſider the former, who were without uniformity of dreſs, or the pertneſs of military airs, to be their equals. The provincial troops were, therefore, for the moſt part aſſigned to ſervices which, though laborious, were not honourable.

The ignorance of Britiſh generals commanding in the woods of America, ſometimes involved them in difficulties from which they had been more than once relieved by the ſuperior local knowledge of the colonial troops. Theſe ſervices were ſoon forgotten, and the moment the troops who performed them could be ſpared, they were diſbanded. Such like obſtacles had hitherto depreſſed military talents in America, but they were now overcome by the ardor of the people.

In the year 1775, a martial ſpirit pervaded all ranks of men in the Colonies. They believed their liberties to be in danger, and were generally diſpoſed to riſque their lives for their eſtabliſhment. Their ignorance of the military art prevented their weighing the chances of war with that exactneſs of calculation which, if indulged, might have damped their hopes. They conceived that there was little more to do than fight manfully for their country. They conſoled themſelves with the idea, that though their firſt attempt might be unſucceſsful, their numbers would admit of a repetition of the experiment, till the invaders were finally exterminated. Not conſi-

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dering that in modern war the longeſt purſe decides oftener than the longeſt ſword, they feared not the wealth of Britain. They both expected and wiſhed that the whole diſpute would be ſpeedily ſettled in a few deciſive engagements. Elevated with the love of liberty, and buoyed above the fear of conſequences, by an ardent military enthuſiaſm, unabated by calculations about the extent, duration, or probable iſſue of the war, the people of America ſeconded the voice of their rulers, in an appeal to Heaven for the vindication of their rights. At the time the Colonies adopted theſe ſpirited reſolutions, they poſſeſſed not a ſingle ſhip of war, not ſo much as an armed veſſel of any kind. It had often been ſuggeſted that their ſeaport towns lay at the mercy of the navy of Great Britain; this was both known and believed, but diſregarded. The love of property was abſorbed in the love of liberty. The animated votaries of the equal rights of human nature, conſoled themſelves with the idea, that though their whole ſea coaſt ſhould be laid in aſhes, they could retire to the weſtern wilderneſs, and enjoy the luxury of being free; on this occaſion it was obſerved in Congreſs by Chriſtopher Gadſden, one of the South-Carolina delegates, "Our houſes being conſtructed of brick, ſtone, and wood, though deſtroyed may be rebuilt, but liberty once gone is loſt for ever." 1775.

The ſober diſcretion of the preſent age will more readily cenſure than admire, but can more eaſily admire than imitate the fervid zeal of the patriots of 1775, who in idea ſacrificed property in the cauſe of liberty, with the eaſe that they now ſacrifice almoſt every other conſideration for the acquiſition of property.

The revenues of Britain were immenſe, and her people were habituated to the payment of large ſums in every form which contributions to government have aſſumed; but the American Colonies poſſeſs neither money nor funds, nor were their people accuſtomed to taxes equal to the exigencies of war. The conteſt having begun about taxation, to have raiſed money by taxes for carrying it on would have been impolitic. The temper of the times precluded the neceſſity of attempting the dangerous

1775 gerous expedient, for ſuch was the euthuſiaſm of the day, that the Coloniſts gave up both their perſonal ſervices and their property to the public, on the vague promiſes that they ſhould at a future time be re-imburſed. Without inquiring into the ſolidity of the funds, or the preciſe period of payment, the reſources of the country were commanded on general aſſurances, that all expences of the war ſhould ultimately be equaliſed. The Parent State abounded with experienced ſtateſmen and officers, but the dependent form of government exerciſed in the Colonies, precluded their citizens from gaining that practical knowledge which is acquired from being at the head of public departments. There were very few in the Colonies who underſtood the buſineſs of providing for an army, and ſtill fewer who had experience and knowledge to direct its operations. The diſpoſition of the finances of the country, and the moſt effectual mode of drawing forth its reſources, were ſubjects with which ſcarce any of the inhabitants were acquainted. Arms and ammunition were almoſt wholly deficient; and though the country abounded with the materials of which they are manufactured, yet there was neither time nor artiſts enough to ſupply an army with the means of defence. The country was deſtitute both of fortifications and engineers. Amidſt ſo many diſcouragements there were ſome flattering circumſtances. The war could not be carried on by Great Britain, but to a great diſadvantage and at an immenſe expence. It was eaſy for Miniſters at St. James's to plan campaigns, but hard was the fate of the officer from whom the execution of them in the woods of America was expected. The country was ſo extenſive, and abounded ſo much with defiles; that by evacuating and retreating, the Americans, though they could not conquer, yet might ſave themſelves from being conquered. The authors of the acts of Parliament for reſtraining the trade of the Colonies were moſt excellent recruiting officers for the Congreſs. They impoſed a neceſſity on thouſands to become ſoldiers. All other buſineſs being ſuſpended, the whole reſources of the country were applied in ſupporting an army. Though the

the Coloniſts were without diſcipline, they poſſeſſed native valour. Though they had neither gold nor ſilver, they poſſeſſed a mine in the enthuſiaſm of their people. Paper for upwards of two years produced to them more ſolid advantages than Spain derived from her ſuperabounding precious metals. Though they had no ſhips to protect their trade or their towns, they had ſimplicity enough to live without the former, and enthuſiaſm enough to riſque the latter, rather than ſubmit to the power of Britain. They believed their cauſe to be juſt, and that Heaven approved their exertions in defence of their rights. Zeal originating from ſuch motives ſupplied the place of diſcipline, and inſpired a confidence and military ardour which overleaped all difficulties. 1775.

Reſiſtance being reſolved upon by the Americans—the pulpit—the preſs—the bench, and the bar, ſeverally laboured to unite and encourage them. The clergy of New-England were a numerous, learned, and reſpectable body, who had a great aſcendancy over the minds of their hearers. They connected religion and patriotiſm, and in their ſermons and prayers repreſented the cauſe of America as the cauſe of Heaven. The ſynod of New-York and Philadelphia alſo ſent forth a paſtoral letter, which was publicly read in their churches. This earneſtly recommended ſuch ſentiments and conduct as were ſuitable to their ſituation. Writers and printers followed in the rear of the preachers, and next to them had the greateſt hand in animating their countrymen. Gentlemen of the bench and of the bar denied the charge of rebellion, and juſtified the reſiſtance of the Coloniſts. A diſtinction founded on law between the King and his Miniſtry was introduced: the former, it was contended, could do no wrong. The crime of treaſon was charged on the latter, for uſing the royal name to varniſh their own unconſtitutional meaſures. The phraſe of a miniſterial war became common, and was uſed as a medium for reconciling reſiſtance with allegiance.

Coeval with the reſolutions for organizing an army, was one appointing the 20th day of July 1775, a day of public humiliation, faſting and prayer to Almighty God, to

1775. "to bless their rightful Sovereign King George, and to inspire him with wisdom to discern and pursue the true interest of his subjects; and that the British nation might be influenced to regard the things that belonged to her peace, before they were hid from her eyes—that the Colonies might be ever under the care and protection of a kind Providence, and be prospered in all their interests—that America might soon behold a gracious interposition of Heaven for the redress of her many grievances; the restoration of her invaded rights, and a reconciliation with the Parent State on terms constitutional and honourable to both."—The forces which had been collected in Massachusetts, were stationed in convenient places for guarding the country from farther excursions of the regulars from Boston. Breast-works were also erected in different places for the same purpose. While both parties were attempting to carry off stock from the several islands with which the bay of Boston is agreeably diversified, sundry skirmishes took place. These were of real service to the Americans. They habituated them to danger, and perhaps much of the courage of old soldiers is derived from an experimental conviction that the chance of escaping unhurt from engagements is much greater than young recruits suppose.

About the latter end of May a great part of the reinforcements ordered from Great Britain, arrived at Boston. Three British generals, Howe, Burgoyne, and Clinton, whose behaviour in the preceding war had gained
May 25. them great reputation, also arrived about the same time. General Gage, thus reinforced, prepared for acting with more decision, but before he proceeded to extremities he conceived it due to ancient forms to issue a proclamation, holding forth to the inhabitants the alternative of peace
June 12. or war. He, therefore, offered pardon in the King's name to all who should forthwith lay down their arms and return to their respective occupations and peaceable duties, excepting only from the benefit of that pardon "Samuel Adams and John Hancock, whose offences were said to be of too flagitious a nature to admit of any other consideration than that of condign punishment." He also proclaimed

proclaimed that not only the perſons above named and excepted, but alſo all their adherents, aſſociates, and correſpondents, ſhould be deemed guilty of treaſon and rebellion, and treated accordingly. By this proclamation it was alſo declared, "that as the courts of judicature were ſhut, martial law ſhould take place, till a due courſe of juſtice ſhould be re-eſtabliſhed." It was ſuppoſed that this proclamation was a prelude to hoſtilities, and preparations were accordingly made by the Americans. A conſiderable height, by the name of Bunker's Hill, juſt at the entrance of the peninſula of Charleſtown, was ſo ſituated as to make the poſſeſſion of it a matter of great conſequence to either of the contending parties. Orders were therefore iſſued by the provincial commanders that a detachment of a thouſand men ſhould entrench upon this height. By ſome miſtake Breed's Hill, high and large like the other, but ſituated near Boſton, was marked out for the entrenchments, inſtead of Bunker's Hill. The provincials proceeded to Breed's Hill, and worked with ſo much diligence, that between midnight and the dawn of the morning, they had thrown up a ſmall redoubt about 8 rods ſquare. They kept ſuch a profound ſilence that they were not heard by the Britiſh, on board their veſſels, though very near. Theſe having derived their firſt information of what was going on from the ſight of the work near completion, began an inceſſant firing upon them. The provincials bore this with firmneſs, and though they were only young ſoldiers, continued to labour till they had thrown up a ſmall breaſtwork, extending from the eaſt ſide of the breaſtwork to the bottom of the hill. As this eminence overlooked Boſton, General Gage thought it neceſſary to drive the provincials from it. About noon therefore he detached Major-general Howe, and Brigadier-general Pigot, with the flower of the army, conſiſting of four battalions, ten companies of the grenadiers, and ten of light infantry, with a proportion of field artillery to effect this buſineſs. Theſe troops landed at Moreton's Point, and formed after landing, but remained in that poſition till they were re-inforced by a ſecond detachment of light infantry and grenadier companies, a battalion of land forces, and a battalion of ma-

1775. June 16. June 17.

rines

1775. rines, making in the whole near 3000 men. While the troops who firſt landed were waiting for this re-inforcement, the provincials, for their farther ſecurity, pulled up ſome adjoining poſt and rail fences, and ſet them down in two parallel lines at a ſmall diſtance from each other, and filled the ſpace between with hay, which having been lately mowed, remained on the adjacent ground.

The King's troops formed in two lines, and advanced ſlowly, to give their artillery time to demoliſh the American works. While the Britiſh were advancing to the attack, they received orders to burn Charleſtown. This was not done, becauſe they were fired upon from the houſes in that town, but from the military policy of depriving enemies of a cover in their approaches. In a ſhort time this ancient town, conſiſting of about 500 buildings, chiefly of wood, was in one great blaze. The lofty ſteeple of the meeting houſe formed a pyramid of fire above the reſt, and ſtruck the aſtoniſhed eyes of numerous beholders with a magnificent but awful ſpectacle. In Boſton the heights of every kind were covered with the citizens, and ſuch of the King's troops as were not on duty. The hills around the adjacent country which afforded a ſafe and diſtinct view, were occupied by the inhabitants of the country.

Thouſands, both within and without Boſton, were anxious ſpectators of the bloody ſcene. The honour of Britiſh troops beat high in the breaſts of many, while others, with a keener ſenſibility, felt for the liberties of a great and growing country. The Britiſh moved on but ſlowly, which gave the provincials a better opportunity for taking aim. The latter, in general, reſerved themſelves till their adverſaries were within ten or twelve rods, but then began a furious diſcharge of ſmall arms. The ſtream of the American fire was ſo inceſſant, and did ſo great execution, that the King's troops retreated in diſorder and precipitation. Their officers rallied them and puſhed them forward with their ſwords, but they returned to the attack with great reluctance. The Americans again reſerved their fire till their adverſaries were near, and then put them a ſecond time to flight. General Howe and the officers redoubled their exertions, and were at laſt ſucceſsful,

ſucceſsful, though the ſoldiers diſcovered a great averſion to going on. By this time the powder of the Americans began ſo far to fail, that they were not able to keep up the ſame briſk fire as before. The Britiſh alſo brought ſome cannon to bear, which raked the inſide of the breaſt-work from end to end. The fire from the ſhips, batteries, and field artillery was redoubled—the ſoldiers in the rear were goaded on by their officers. The redoubt was attacked on three ſides at once. Under theſe circumſtances a retreat from it was ordered, but the provincials delayed, and made reſiſtance with their diſcharged muſkets as if they had been clubs, ſo long that the King's troops who eaſily mounted the works, had half filled the redoubt before it was given up to them. 1775.

While theſe operations were going on at the breaſt-work and redoubt, the Britiſh light infantry were attempting to force the left point of the former, that they might take the American line in flank. Though they exhibited the moſt undaunted courage, they met with an oppoſition which called for its greateſt exertions. The provincials here, in like manner, reſerved their fire till their adverſaries were near, and then poured it upon the light infantry, with ſuch an inceſſant ſtream, and in ſo true a direction, as mowed down their ranks. The engagement was kept up on both ſides with great reſolution. The perſevering exertions of the King's troops could not compel the Americans to retreat, till they obſerved that their main body had left the hill. This, when begun, expoſed them to new danger, for it could not be effected but by marching over Charleſtown Neck, every part of which was raked by the ſhot of the Glaſgow man of war, and of two floating batteries. The inceſſant fire kept up acroſs this Neck prevented any conſiderable re-inforcement from joining their countrymen who were engaged; but the few who fell on their retreat over the ſame ground proved, that the apprehenſions of thoſe provincial officers who declined paſſing over to ſuccour their companions, were without any ſolid foundation.

The number of Americans engaged amounted only to 1500. It was apprehended that the conquerors would puſh

1755. push the advantages they had gained, and march immediately to American head quarters at Cambridge, but they advanced no farther than Bunker's Hill; there they threw up works for their own security. The provincials did the same on Prospect Hill in front of them. Both were guarding against an attack, and both were in a bad condition to receive one. The loss of the peninsula depressed the spirits of the Americans, and their great loss of men produced the same effect on the British. There have been few battles in modern wars, in which, all circumstances considered, there was a greater destruction of men than in this short engagement. The loss of the British, as acknowledged by General Gage, amounted to 1054. Nineteen commissioned officers were killed, and 70 more were wounded. The battle of Quebec in 1759, which gave Great Britain the province of Canada, was not so destructive to British officers as this affair of a slight entrenchment, the work only of a few hours. That the officers suffered so much, must be imputed to their being aimed at. None of the provincials in this engagement were riflemen, but they were all good marksmen. The whole of their previous military knowledge had been derived from hunting, and the ordinary amusements of sportsmen. The dexterity which by long habit they had acquired in hitting beasts, birds, and marks, was fatally applied to the destruction of British officers. From their fall much confusion was expected; they were therefore particularly singled out. Most of those who were near the person of General Howe were either killed or wounded, but the General, though he greatly exposed himself, was unhurt. The light infantry and grenadiers lost three-fourths of their men. Of one company not more than five, and of another, not more than fourteen escaped. The unexpected resistance of the Americans was such as wiped away the reproaches of cowardice, which had been cast on them by their enemies in Britain. The spirited conduct of the British officers merited and obtained great applause, but the provincials were justly entitled to a large portion of the same, for having made the utmost exertions of their adversaries necessary to dislodge them from

from lines, which were the work only of a ſingle night. 1755.
The Americans loſt five pieces of cannon. Their killed amounted to 139. Their wounded and miſſing to 314. Thirty of the former fell into the hands of the conquerors. They particularly regretted the death of General Warren. To the pureſt patriotiſm and moſt undaunted bravery, he added the virtues of domeſtic life, the eloquence of an accompliſhed orator, and the wiſdom of an able ſtateſman. Nothing but a regard to the liberty of his country induced him to oppoſe the meaſures of Government. He aimed not at a ſeparation from, but a coalition with the Mother Country. He took an active part in defence of his country, not that he might be applauded and rewarded for a patriotic ſpirit, but becauſe he was, in the beſt ſenſe of the word, a real patriot. Having no intereſted or perſonal views to anſwer, the friends of liberty confided in his integrity. The ſoundneſs of his judgement, and his abilities as a public ſpeaker, enabled him to make a diſtinguiſhed figure in public councils, but his intrepidity and active zeal induced his countrymen to place him in the military line. Within four days after he was appointed a Major General, he fell a noble ſacrifice to a cauſe which he had eſpouſed from the pureſt principles. Like Hambden he lived and like Hambden he died, univerſally beloved and univerſally regretted. His many virtues were celebrated in an elegant eulogim written by Dr. Ruſh, in language equal to the illuſtrious ſubject. The burning of Charleſtown, though a place of great trade, did not diſcourage the provincials. It excited reſentment and execration, but not any diſpoſition to ſubmit. Such was the high-toned ſtate of the public mind, and ſo great the indifference for property, when put in competition with liberty, that military conflagrations, though they diſtreſſed and impoveriſhed, had no tendency to ſubdue the Coloniſts. They might anſwer in the old world, but were not calculated for the new, where the war was undertaken, not for a change of maſters, but for ſecuring eſſential rights. The action at Breed's Hill, or Bunker's Hill, as it has been commonly called, produced many and very important conſequences.

1775. sequences. It taught the British so much respect for Americans intrenched behind works, that their subsequent operations were retarded with a caution that wasted away a whole campaign to very little purpose. It added to the confidence the Americans began to have in their own abilities; but inferences, very injurious to the future interests of America, were drawn from the good conduct of the new troops on that memorable day. It inspired some of the leading members of Congress with such high ideas of what might be done by militia, or men engaged for a short term of inlistment, that it was long before they assented to the establishment of a permanent army. Not distinguishing the continued exertions of an army through a series of years, from the gallant efforts of the yeomanry of the country, led directly to action, they were slow in admitting the necessity of permanent troops. They conceived the country might be defended by the occasional exertions of her sons, without the expence and danger of an army engaged for the war. In the progress of hostilities, as will appear in the sequel, the militia lost much of their first ardour, while leading men in the councils of America, trusting to its continuance, neglected the proper time of recruiting for a series of years. From the want of perseverance in the militia, and the want of a disciplined standing army, the cause for which arms were at first taken up, was more than once brought to the brink of destruction.

C H A P. VII.

The second Congress meets and organises a regular Continental Army—makes sundry public Addresses and Petitions to the King, &c. Transaction in Massachusetts.

IT has already been mentioned, that Congress, previous to its dissolution, on the 26th of October, 1774, recommended to the Colonies to chuse members for another to meet on the tenth of May, 1775, unless the redress of their grievances was previously obtained. A circular letter had been addressed to Lord Dartmouth, to the several

ſeveral colonial governors, requeſting their interference 1775.
to prevent the meeting of this ſecond Congreſs; but miniſterial requiſitions had loſt their influence, delegates were elected not only for the twelve Colonies that were before repreſented; but alſo for the pariſh of St. John's in Georgia, and in July following, for the whole province. The time of the meeting of this ſecond Congreſs was fixed at ſo diſtant a day, that an opportunity might be afforded for obtaining information of the plans adopted by the Britiſh Parliament in the winters of 1774 and 1775. Had theſe been favourable, the delegates would either not have met, or diſperſed after a ſhort ſeſſion, but as the reſolution was then fixed to compel the ſubmiſſion of the Colonies, and hoſtilities had already commenced, the meeting of Congreſs on the tenth of May, which was at May 10.
firſt eventual, became fixed.

On their meeting they choſe Peyton Randolph for their Preſident, and Charles Thomſon for their ſecretary. On the next day Mr. Hancock laid before them a variety of depoſitions, proving that the King's troops were the aggreſſors in the late battle at Lexington, together with ſundry papers relative to the great events which had lately taken place in Maſſachuſetts: whereupon Congreſs reſolved itſelf into a committee of the whole, to take into conſideration the ſtate of America. They proceeded in the ſame line of moderation and firmneſs, which marked the acts of their predeceſſors in the paſt year.

The city and county of New-York having applied to Congreſs for advice, how they ſhould conduct themſelves with regard to the troops expected to land there, they were adviſed "to act on the defenſive ſo long as might May 15.
be conſiſtent with their ſafety; to permit the troops to remain in the barracks ſo long as they behaved peaceably, but not to ſuffer fortifications to be erected, or any ſteps to be taken for cutting off the communication between the town and country." Congreſs alſo reſolved, "That May 17.
exportation to all parts of Britiſh America, which had not adopted their aſſociation, ſhould immediately ceaſe;" and that, "no proviſion of any kind, or other neceſſaries be furniſhed to the Britiſh fiſheries on the American coaſts."

1775. June 2. coasts." And "that no bill of exchange, draught, or order of any officer in the British army or navy, their agents or contractors, be received or negociated, or any money supplied them by any person in America—that no provisions or necessaries of any kind be furnished or supplied to or for the use of the British army or navy, in the Colony of Massachusetts Bay—that no vessel employed in transporting British troops to America, or from one part of North-America to another, or warlike stores or provisions for the said troops be freighted or furnished with provisions or any necessaries." These resolutions may be considered as the counterpart of the British acts for restraining the commerce, and prohibiting the fisheries of the Colonies. They were calculated to bring distress on the British islands in the West Indies, whose chief dependence for subsistance was on the importation of provision from the American Continent. They also occasioned new difficulties in the support of the British army and fisheries. The Colonists were so much indebted to Great Britain, that government bills for the most part found among them a ready market. A war in the Colonies was therefore made subservient to commerce, by increasing the sources of remittance. This enabled the Mother Country, in a great degree, to supply her troops without shipping money out of the kingdom. From the operation of these resolutions, advantages of this nature were not only cut off, but the supply of the British army rendered both precarious and expensive. In consequence of the interdiction of the American fisheries, great profits were expected by British adventurers in that line. Such frequently found it most convenient to obtain supplies in America for carrying on their fisheries; but as Great Britain had deprived the Colonists of all benefits from that quarter, they now, in their turn, interdicted all supplies from being furnished to British fishermen. To obviate this unexpected embarrassment, several of the vessels employed in this business were obliged to return home to bring out provisions for their associates. These restrictive resolutions were not so much the effect of resentment as of policy. The Colonists conceived, that by

by diftreffing the Britifh commerce, they would increafe the number of thofe who would intereft themfelves in their behalf. 1775.

The new Congrefs had convened but a few days, when their venerable prefident, Peyton Randolph, was under a neceffity of returning home. On his departure John Hancock was unanimoufly chofen his fucceffor. The objects of deliberation prefented to this new Congrefs were, if poffible, more important than thofe which in the preceding year had engaged the attention of their predeceffors. The Colonifts had now experienced the inefficacy of thofe meafures, from which relief had been formerly obtained. They found a new Parliament difpofed to run all rifques in enforcing their fubmiffion; they alfo underftood that adminiftration was united againft them, and its members firmly eftablifhed in their places. Hoftilities were commenced; re-inforcements had arrived, and more were daily expected. Added to this, they had information that their adverfaries had taken meafures to fecure the friendfhip and co-operation of the Indians, and alfo of the Canadians.

The coercion of the Colonies being refolved upon, and their conqueft fuppofed to be inevitable, the Britifh Miniftry judged that it would be for the intereft of both countries to proceed in that vigorous courfe, which bid faireft for the fpeedieft attainment of their object. They hoped by preffing the Colonifts on all quarters, to intimidate oppofition, and ultimately to leffen the effufion of human blood.

In this awful crifis Congrefs had but a choice of difficulties. The New-England ftates had already organized an army and blockaded General Gage. To defert them would have been contrary to plighted faith and to found policy; to fupport them would make the war general, and involve all the provinces in one general promifcuous ftate of hoftility. The refolution of the people in favour of the latter was fixed, and only wanted public fanction for its operation. Congrefs therefore refolved, "that for the exprefs purpofe of defending and May 26. fecuring the Colonies, and preferving them in fafety, againft all

1775. all attempts to carry the late acts of Parliament into execution, by force of arms, they be immediately put in a ſtate of defence; but as they wiſhed for a reſtoration of the harmony formerly ſubſiſting between the Mother Country and the Colonies, to the promotion of this moſt deſireable reconciliation, an humble and dutiful petition be preſented to his Majeſty. To reſiſt and to petition were coeval reſolutions. As freemen they could not tamely ſubmit, but as loyal ſubjects, wiſhing for peace as far as was compatible with their rights, they once more, in the character of petitioners, humbly ſtated their grievances to the common father of the empire. To diſſuade the Canadians from co-operating with the Britiſh, they again addreſſed them, repreſenting the pernicious tendency of the Quebec act, and apologizing for their taking Ticonderoga and Crown-Point, as meaſures which were dictated by the great law of ſelf-preſervation. About the ſame time Congreſs took meaſures for warding off the danger that threatened their frontier inhabitants from Indians. Commiſſioners to treat with them were appointed, and a ſupply of goods for their uſe was ordered. A talk was alſo prepared by Congreſs, and tranſmitted to them, in which the controverſy between Great Britain and her Colonies was explained, in a familiar Indian ſtyle, They were told that they had no concern in the family quarrel, and were urged by the ties of ancient friendſhip and a common birth place, to remain at home, keep their hatchet buried deep, and to join neither ſide.

The novel ſituation of Maſſachuſetts made it neceſſary for the ruling powers of that province to aſk the advice of Congreſs on a very intereſting ſubject, "The taking up and exerciſing the powers of civil government." For many months they had been kept together in tolerable peace and order by the force of ancient habits, under the ſimple ſtyle of recommendation and advice from popular bodies, inveſted with no legiſlative authority. But as war now raged in their borders, and a numerous army was actually raiſed, ſome more efficient form of government became neceſſary. At this early day it neither

ther comported with the wiſhes nor the deſigns of the Coloniſts to erect forms of government independent of Great Britain; Congreſs therefore recommended only ſuch regulations as were immediately neceſſary, and theſe were conformed as near as poſſible to the ſpirit and ſubſtance of the charter, and were only to laſt till a Governor of his Majeſty's appointment would conſent to govern the Colony according to its charter. 1775.

On the ſame principles of neceſſity, another aſſumption of new powers became unavoidable. The great intercourſe that daily took place throughout the Colonies, pointed out the propriety of eſtabliſhing a general poſt-office. This was accordingly done, and Dr. Franklin, who had by royal authority been diſmiſſed from a ſimilar employment about three years before, was appointed by his country, the head of the new department.

While Congreſs was making arrangements for their propoſed continental army, it was thought expedient once more to addreſs the inhabitants of Great Britain, and to publiſh to the world a declaration ſetting forth their reaſons for taking up arms—to addreſs the Speaker and Gentlemen of the Aſſembly of Jamaica, and the inhabitants of Ireland, and alſo to prefer a ſecond humble petition to the King. In their addreſs to the inhabitants of Great Britain, they again vindicated themſelves from the charge of aiming at independency, profeſſed their willingneſs to ſubmit to the ſeveral acts of trade and navigation which were paſſed before the year 1763, recapitulated their reaſons for rejecting Lord North's conciliatory motion—ſtated the hardſhips they ſuffered from the operations of the royal army in Boſton, and inſinuated the danger the inhabitants of Britain would be in of loſing their freedom, in caſe their American brethren were ſubdued.

In their declaration, ſetting forth the cauſes and neceſſity of their taking up arms, they enumerated the injuries they had received, and the methods taken by the Britiſh Miniſtry to compel their ſubmiſſion, and then ſaid, "We are reduced to the alternative of chooſing an unconditional ſubmiſſion to the tyranny of irritated Miniſters, or

1775. resistance by force. The latter is our choice. We have counted the cost of this contest, and find nothing so dreadful as voluntary slavery." They asserted "that foreign assistance was undoubtedly attainable." This was not founded on any private information, but was an opinion derived from their knowledge of the principles of policy, by which states usually regulate their conduct towards each other.

In their address to the Speaker and Gentlemen of the Assembly of Jamaica, they dilated on the arbitrary systems of the British Ministry, and informed them, that in order to obtain a redress of their grievances, they had appealed to the justice, humanity, and interest of Great Britain. They stated, that to make their schemes of non-importation and non-exportation produce the desired effects, they were obliged to extend them to the islands. "From that necessity, and from that alone," said they, "our conduct has proceeded." They concluded with saying, "the peculiar situation of your island forbids your assistance, but we have your good wishes—from the good wishes of the friends of liberty and mankind we shall always derive consolation."

In their address to the people of Ireland they recapitulated their grievances, stated their humble petitions, and the neglect with which they had been treated. "In defence of our persons and properties under actual violations," said they, "we have taken up arms. When that violence shall be removed, and hostilities cease on the part of the aggressors, they shall cease on our part also."

These several addresses were executed in a masterly manner, and were well calculated to make friends to the Colonies. But their petition to the King, which was drawn up at the same time, produced more solid advantages in favour of the American cause, than any other of their productions. This was in a great measure carried through Congress by Mr. Dickinson. Several members, judging from the violence with which Parliament proceeded against the Colonies, were of opinion that farther petitions were nugatory; but this worthy citizen, a friend to both countries, and devoted to a reconciliation on consti-

constitutional principles, urged the expediency and policy of trying once more the effect of an humble, decent, and firm petition, to the common head of the empire. The high opinion that was conceived of his patriotism and abilities, induced the members to assent to the measure, though they generally conceived it to be labour lost. The petition agreed upon was the work of Mr. Dickinson's pen. In this, among other things, it was stated, "that notwithstanding their sufferings, they had retained too high a regard for the kingdom from which they derived their origin, to request such a reconciliation as might in any manner be inconsistent with her dignity and welfare. Attached to his Majesty's person, family, and government, with all the devotion that principle and affection can inspire, connected with Great Britain by the strongest ties that can unite society, and deploring every event that tended in any degree to weaken them, they not only most fervently desired the former harmony between her and the Colonies to be restored, but that a concord might be established between them, upon so firm a basis as to perpetuate its blessings, uninterrupted by any future dissentions, to succeeding generations, in both countries. They therefore beseeched that his Majesty would be pleased to direct some mode by which the united applications of his faithful Colonists to the Throne, in pursuance of their common councils, might be improved into a happy and permanent reconciliation." By this last clause Congress meant that the Mother Country should propose a plan for establishing by compact, something like Magna Charta for the Colonies. They did not aim at a total exemption from the controul of Parliament, nor were they unwilling to contribute, in their own way, to the expences of government; but they feared the horrors of war less than submission to unlimited parliamentary supremacy. They wished for an amicable compact, in which doubtful, undefined points, should be ascertained so as to secure that proportion of authority and liberty which would be for the general good of the whole empire. They fancied themselves in the condition of the Barons at Runnymede; but with this difference, that in addition,

1775. July 8.

1775. addition to opposing the King, they had also to oppose the Parliament. This difference was more nominal than real, for in the latter case the King and Parliament stood precisely in the same relation to the people of America, which subsisted in the former between the King and people of England. In both, popular leaders were contending with the Sovereign for the privileges of subjects. This well-meant petition was presented on September 1st, 1775, by Mr. Penn and Mr. Lee, and on the 4th Lord Dartmouth informed them, "that to it no answer would be given." This slight contributed not a little to the union and perseverance of the Colonies. When pressed by the calamities of a war, a doubt would sometimes arise in the minds of scrupulous persons, that they had been too hasty in their opposition to their protecting Parent State. To such it was usual to present the second petition of Congress to the King, observing thereon, that all the blood and all the guilt of the war, must be charged on British, and not on American counsels. Though the Oct. 26. Colonists were accused in a speech from the throne, as meaning only, "to amuse by vague expressions of attachment to the Parent State, and the strongest protestations of loyalty to their King, while they were preparing for a general revolt, and that their rebellious war was manifestly carried on for the purpose of establishing an independent empire." Yet at that time, and for months after, a redress of grievances was their ultimate aim. Conscious of this intention, and assenting in the sincerity of their souls to the submissive language of their petition, they illy brooked the contempt with which their joint supplication was treated, and still worse, that they should be charged from the throne with studied duplicity. Nothing contributes more to the success of revolutions than moderation. Intemperate zealots overshoot themselves, and soon spend their force, while the calm and dispassionate persevere to the end. The bulk of the people in civil commotions are influenced to a choice of sides, by the general complection of the measures adopted by the respective parties. When these appear to be dictated by justice and prudence, and to be unin-

1775.

uninfluenced by paſſion, ambition, or avarice, they are diſpoſed to favour them. Such was the effect of this ſecond petition, through a long and trying war, in which men of ſerious reflection were often called upon to examine the rectitude of their conduct.

Though the refuſal of an anſwer to this renewed application of Congreſs to the King, was cenſured by numbers in Great Britain, as well as in the Colonies, yet the partiſans of Miniſtry varniſhed the meaſure as proper and expedient. They contended that the petition, as it contained no offers of ſubmiſſion, was unavailing, as a ground work of negociation. Nothing was farther from the thoughts of Congreſs than ſuch conceſſions as were expected in Great Britain. They conceived themſelves to be more ſinned againſt than ſinning. They claimed a redreſs of grievances as a matter of right, but were perſuaded that conceſſions for this purpoſe were acts of juſtice and not of humiliation, and therefore could not be diſgraceful to thoſe by whom they were made. To prevent future altercations they wiſhed for an amicable compact to aſcertain the extent of parliamentary ſupremacy. The Mother Country wiſhed for abſolute ſubmiſſion to her authority; the Coloniſts for a repeal of every act that impoſed taxes, or that interfered in their internal legiſlation. The Miniſtry of England being determined not to repeal theſe acts, and the Congreſs equally determined not to ſubmit to them, the claims of the two countries were ſo wide of each other as to afford no reaſonable ground to expect a compromiſe. It was therefore concluded, that any notice taken of the petition would only afford an opportunity for the Colonies to prepare themſelves for the laſt extremity.

A military oppoſition to the armies of Great Britain being reſolved upon by the Colonies, it became an object of conſequence to fix on a proper perſon to conduct that oppoſition. Many of the Coloniſts had titles of high rank in the militia, and ſeveral had ſeen ſomething of real ſervice, in the late war between France and England; but there was no individual of ſuch ſuperior military experience as to entitle him to a decided pre-eminence, or even

1775. to qualify him, on that ground, to contend on equal terms with the British masters of the art of war. In elevating one man, by the free voice of an invaded country, to the command of thousands of his equal fellow-citizens, no consideration was regarded but the interest of the community. To bind the uninvaded provinces more closely to the common cause, policy directed the views of Congress to the south.

Among the southern Colonies, Virginia, for numbers, wealth, and influence, stood pre-eminent. To attach so respectable a Colony to the aid of Massachusets, by selecting a commander in chief from that quarter, was not less warranted by the great military genius of one of her distinguished citizens, than dictated by sound policy. George Washington was, by an unanimous vote, appointed commander in chief of all the forces raised, or to be raised, for the defence of the Colonies. It was a fortunate circumstance attending his election, that it was accompanied with no competition, and followed by no envy. That same general impulse on the public mind, which led the Colonists to agree in many other particulars, pointed to him as the most proper person for presiding over the military arrangements of America. Not only Congress, but the inhabitants in the east and the west, in the north and the south, as well before as at the time of embodying a continental army, were in a great degree unanimous in his favour. An attempt to draw the character of this truly great man would look like flattery. Posterity will doubtless do it justice. His actions, especially now, while fresh in remembrance, are his amplest panegyric. Suffice it, in his life-time, only to particularize those qualities, which being more common, may be mentioned without offending the delicate sensibility of the most modest of men.

June 15.

General Washington was born on the 11th of February 1732. His education was such as favoured the production of a solid mind and a vigorous body. Mountain air, abundant exercise in the open country, the wholesome toils of the chace, and the delightful scenes of rural life, expanded his limbs to an unusual but graceful

1775.

ful and well-proportioned ſize. His youth was ſpent in the acquiſition of uſeful knowledge, and in purſuits tending to the improvement of his fortune, or the benefit of his country. Fitted more for active than for ſpeculative life, he devoted the greater proportion of his time to the former, but this was amply compenſated by his being frequently in ſuch ſituations, as called forth the powers of his mind, and ſtrengthened them by repeated exerciſe. Early in life, in obedience to his country's call, he entered the military line, and began his career of fame in oppoſing that power in concert with whoſe troops, he had acquired his laſt and moſt diſtinguiſhed honours. He was with General Braddock in 1755, when that unfortunate officer, from an exceſs of bravery, choſe rather to ſacrifice his army than retreat from an unſeen foe. The remains of that unfortunate corps were brought off the field of battle chiefly by the addreſs and good conduct of Colonel Waſhington. After the peace of Paris 1763, he retired to his eſtate, and with great induſtry and ſucceſs purſued the arts of peaceful life. When the proceedings of the Britiſh Parliament alarmed the Coloniſts with apprehenſions that a blow was levelled at their liberties, he again came forward into public view, and was appointed a delegate to the Congreſs, which met in September 1774. Poſſeſſed of a large proportion of common ſenſe directed by a ſound judgement, he was better fitted for the exalted ſtation to which he was called, than many others who to a greater brilliancy of parts frequently add the eccentricity of original genius. Engaged in the buſy ſcenes of life, he knew human nature, and the moſt proper method of accompliſhing propoſed objects. His paſſions were ſubdued and kept in ſubjection to reaſon. His ſoul, ſuperior to party ſpirit, to prejudice, and illiberal views, moved according to the impulſes it received from an honeſt heart, a good underſtanding, common ſenſe, and a ſound judgement. He was habituated to view things on every ſide, to conſider them in all relations, and to trace the poſſible and probable conſequences of propoſed meaſures. Much addicted to cloſe thinking, his mind was conſtantly employed. By frequent exerciſe,

1775. cise, his underſtanding and judgement expanded ſo as to be able to diſcern truth, and to know what was proper to be done in the moſt difficult conjunctures.

Soon after General Waſhington was appointed commander in chief of the American army, four major-generals, one adjutant-general, with the rank of a brigadier, and eight brigadier-generals, were appointed in ſubordination to him, which were as follows:

1ſt. Major General	Artemas Ward.
2d.	Charles Lee.
3d.	Philip Schuyler.
4th.	Iſrael Putnam.
Adjutant General.	Horatio Gates.
The 8 Brigadiers were	
1ſt.	Seth Pomeroy.
2d.	Richard Montgomery.
3d.	David Wooſter.
4th.	William Heath.
5th.	Joſeph Spencer.
6th.	John Thomas.
7th.	John Sullivan.
8th.	Nathaniel Greene.

General Waſhington replied to the Preſident of Congreſs announcing his appointment, in the following words:

"Mr. Preſident,

"Though I am truly ſenſible of the high honour done me in this appointment, yet I feel great diſtreſs from a conſciouſneſs that my abilities and military experience may not be equal to the extenſive and important truſt: however, as the Congreſs deſire it, I will enter upon the momentous duty, and exert every power I poſſeſs in their ſervice, and for ſupport of the glorious cauſe. I beg they will accept my moſt cordial thanks for this diſtinguiſhed teſtimony of their approbation.

"But, leſt ſome unlucky event ſhould happen unfavourable to my reputation, I beg it may be remembered by every gentleman in the room, that I this day declare, with the utmoſt ſincerity, I do not think myſelf equal to the command I am honoured with.

"As

"As to pay, Sir, I beg leave to aſſure the Congreſs, that as no pecuniary conſideration could have tempted me to accept this arduous employment, at the expence of my domeſtic eaſe and happineſs, I do not wiſh to make any profit from it. I will keep an exact account of my expences. Thoſe, I doubt not, they will diſcharge, and that is all I deſire." 1775.

A ſpecial commiſſion was drawn up and preſented to him, and at the ſame time an unanimous reſolution was adopted by Congreſs, "That they would maintain and aſſiſt him, and adhere to him with their lives and fortunes in the cauſe of American liberty." Inſtructions were alſo given him for his government, by which, after reciting various particulars, he was directed "to deſtroy, or make priſoners of all perſons who now are, or who hereafter ſhall appear, in arms againſt the good people of the Colonies:" but the whole was ſummed up in authoriſing him "to order and diſpoſe of the army under his command, as might be moſt advantageous for obtaining the end for which it had been raiſed, making it his ſpecial care in diſcharge of the great truſt committed to him, that the liberties of America received no detriment." About the ſame time twelve companies of riflemen were ordered to be raiſed in Pennſylvania, Maryland, and Virginia. The men, to the amount of 1430, were procured and forwarded with great expedition. They had to march from 4 to 700 miles, and yet the whole buſineſs was completed and they joined the American army at Cambridge, in leſs than two months from the day on which the firſt reſolution for raiſing them was agreed to. June 14, 22.

Coeval with the reſolution for raiſing an army, was another for remitting a ſum not exceeding two millions of Spaniſh milled dollars in bills of credit for the defence of America, and the Colonies were pledged for the redemption of them. This ſum was increaſed from time to time by farther emiſſions. The Colonies, having neither money nor revenue at their command, were forced to adopt this expedient, the only one which was in their power for ſupporting an army. No one delegate oppoſed June 22.

1775. opposed the measure. So great had been the credit of the former emissions of paper in the greater part of the Colonies, that very few at that time foresaw or apprehended the consequences of unfunded paper emissions, but had all the consequences which resulted from this measure in the course of the war been foreseen, it must, notwithstanding, have been adopted, for it was a less evil that there should be a general wreck of property, than that the essential rights and liberties of a growing country should be lost. A happy ignorance of future events combined with the ardour of the times, prevented many reflections on this subject, and gave credit and circulation to these bills of credit.

General Washington, soon after his appointment to the command of the American army, set out for the camp at Cambridge. On his way thither, he received an address from the Provincial Congress of New-York, in which they expressed their joy at his appointment; they also said, "we have the fullest assurances that whenever this important contest shall be decided by that fondest wish of each American soul, an accommodation with our Mother Country, you will cheerfully resign the important deposit committed into your hands, and re-assume the character of our worthiest citizen. The General, after declaring his gratitude for the regard shewn him, added, "Be assured, that every exertion of my worthy colleagues and myself will be extended to the re-establishment of peace and harmony between the Mother Country and these Colonies. As to the fatal but necessary operations of war, when we assumed the soldier, we did not lay aside the citizen, and we shall most sincerely rejoice with you in that happy hour, when the re-establishment of American liberty, on the most firm and solid foundations, shall enable us to return to our private stations, in the bosom of a free, peaceful, and happy country."

The General on his way to camp was treated with the highest honours in every place through which he passed. Large detachments of volunteers composed of private gentlemen turned out to escort him. A committee from the Massachusetts Congress received him about 100 miles from

from Boston, and conducted him to the army. He was soon after addressed by the Congress of that Colony in the most affectionate manner; in his answer he said, "Gentlemen, your kind congratulations on my appointment and arrival, demand my warmest acknowledgements, and will ever be retained in grateful remembrance. In exchanging the enjoyment of domestic life for the duties of my present honourable but arduous station, I only emulate the virtue and public spirit of the whole province of Massachusetts, which, with a firmness and patriotism without example, has sacrificed all the comforts of social and political life, in support of the rights of mankind and the welfare of our common country. My highest ambition is to be the happy instrument of vindicating these rights, and to see this devoted province again restored to peace, liberty, and safety. 1775.

When General Washington arrived at Cambridge, he was received with the joyful acclamations of the American army. At the head of his troops he published a declaration, previously drawn up by Congress, in the nature of a manifesto, setting forth the reasons for taking up arms. In this, after enumerating various grievances of the Colonies, and vindicating them from a premeditated design of establishing independent states, it was added, "In our own native land, in defence of the freedom which is our birth-right, and which we ever enjoyed till the late violation of it—for the protection of our property, acquired solely by the industry of our forefathers and ourselves, against violence actually offered, we have taken up arms; we shall lay them down when hostilities shall cease on the part of the aggressors, and all danger of their being renewed shall be removed, and not before." July 3.

When General Washington joined the American army, he found the British intrenched on Bunker's Hill, having also three floating batteries in Mystic river, and a twenty gun ship below the ferry, between Boston and Charlestown. They had also a battery on Copse's Hill, and were strongly fortified on the Neck. The Americans were intrenched at Winter Hill, Prospect Hill, and Roxbury, communicating with one another by small posts, over

1775. over a diſtance of ten miles. There were alſo parties ſtationed in ſeveral towns along the ſea coaſt. They had neither engineers to plan ſuitable works, nor ſufficient tools for their erection.

In the American camp was collected a large body of men, but without thoſe conveniencies which ancient eſtabliſhments have introduced for the comfort of regular armies. Inſtead of tents, ſails now rendered uſeleſs by the obſtructions of commerce, were applied for their covering; but even of them there was not a ſufficiency. The American ſoldiers having joined the camp in all that variety of cloathing which they uſed in their daily labour, were without uniformity of dreſs. To aboliſh provincial diſtinctions, the hunting ſhirt was introduced. They were alſo without thoſe heads of departments in the line of commiſſaries or quarter-maſters, which are neceſſary for the regular and economical ſupply of armies. The troops from Connecticut had proper officers appointed to procure them ſupplies, but they who came from the other Colonies were not ſo well furniſhed. Individuals brought to camp their own proviſions on their own horſes. In ſome parts committees of ſupplies were appointed, who purchaſed neceſſaries at public expence, ſent them on to camp, and diſtributed them to ſuch as were in want, without any regularity or ſyſtem; the country afforded proviſions, and nothing more was wanting to ſupply the army than proper ſyſtems for their collection and diſtribution. Other articles, though equally neceſſary, were almoſt wholly deficient, and could not be procured but with difficulty. On the 4th of Auguſt the whole ſtock of powder in the American camp, and in the public magazines of the four New-England provinces, would make but little more than nine rounds a man. The continental army remained in this deſtitute condition for a fortnight or more. This was generally known among themſelves, and was alſo communicated to the Britiſh by a deſerter, but they ſuſpecting a plot would not believe it. A ſupply of a few tons was ſent on to them from the committee of Elizabeth-town, but this was done privately, leſt the adjacent inhabitants, who were equally deſtitute,

ſtitute, ſhould ſtop it for their own uſe. The public rulers in Maſſachuſetts iſſued a recommendation to the inhabitants, not to fire a gun at a beaſt, bird, or mark, in order that they might huſband their little ſtock for the more neceſſary purpoſe of ſhooting men. A ſupply of ſeveral thouſand pounds weight of powder was ſoon after obtained from Africa in exchange for New-England rum. This was managed with ſo much addreſs, that every ounce for ſale in the Britiſh forts on the African coaſts, was purchaſed up and brought off for the uſe of the Americans. 1775.

Embarraſſments from various quarters occurred in the formation of a continental army. The appointment of general officers made by Congreſs was not ſatisfactory. Enterpriſing leaders had come forward with their followers, on the commencement of hoſtilities, without ſcrupulous attention to rank. When theſe were all blended together, it was impoſſible to aſſign to every officer the ſtation which his ſervices merited, or his vanity demanded. Materials for a good army were collected. The huſbandmen who flew to arms were active, zealous, and of unqueſtionable courage, but to introduce diſcipline and ſubordination among freemen, who were habituated to think for themſelves, was an arduous labour.

The want of ſyſtem and of union, under proper heads, pervaded every department. From the circumſtance that the perſons employed in providing neceſſaries for the army were unconnected with each other, much waſte and unneceſſary delays were occaſioned. The troops of the different Colonies came into ſervice under varied eſtabliſhments—ſome were enliſted with the expreſs condition of chooſing their officers. The rations promiſed by the local legiſlatures varied both as to quantity, quality, and price. To form one uniform maſs of theſe diſcordant materials, and to ſubject the licentiouſneſs of independent freemen to the controul of military diſcipline, was a delicate and difficult buſineſs.

The continental army, put under the command of General Waſhington, amounted to about 14,500 men. Theſe had been ſo judiciouſly ſtationed round Boſton, as to

1775. to confine the British to the town, and to exclude them from the forage and provisions which the adjacent country and islands in Boston Bay afforded. The force was thrown into three grand divisions. General Ward commanded the right wing at Roxbury. General Lee the left at Prospect Hill, and the centre was commanded by General Washington. In arranging the army, the military skill of Adjutant-general Gates was of great service. Method and punctuality were introduced. The officers and privates were taught to know their respective places, and to have the mechanism and movements as well as the name of an army.

When some effectual pains had been taken to discipline the army, it was found that the term for which enlistments had taken place, was on the point of expiring. The troops from Connecticut and Rhode-Island were only engaged till the first day of December 1775, and no part of the army longer than the first day of January 1776. Such mistaken apprehensions respecting the future conduct of Great Britain prevailed, that many thought the appearance of a determined spirit of resistance would lead to a redress of all their grievances.

Oct. 10. Towards the close of the year, General Gage sailed for England, and the command devolved on General Howe.

Nov. The Massachusetts Assembly and Continental Congress, both resolved to fit out armed vessels to cruise on the American coast, for the purpose of interrupting warlike stores and supplies designed for the use of the British army. The object was at first limited, but as the prospect of accommodation vanished, it was extended to all British property afloat on the high seas. The Americans were diffident of their ability to do any thing on water in opposition to the greatest naval power in the world, but from a combination of circumstances, their first attempts were successful.

Nov. 29. The Lee privateer, Capt. Manley, took the brig Nancy, an ordnance ship from Woolwich, containing a large brass mortar, several pieces of brass cannon, a large quantity of arms and ammunition, with all manner of tools, utensils,

utenſils, and machines, neceſſary for camps and artillery. 1775.
Had Congreſs ſent an order for ſupplies, they could not have made out a liſt of articles more ſuitable to their ſituation, than what was thus providentally thrown into their hands.

In about nine days after, three ſhips, with various ſtores Dec. 8.
for the Britiſh army, and a brig from Antigua with rum, were taken by Capt. Manly. Before five days more had elapſed, ſeveral other ſtore ſhips were captured. By theſe means the diſtreſſes of the Britiſh troops, in Boſton, were increaſed, and ſupplies for the continental army were procured. Naval captures being unexpected, were matter of triumph to the Americans, and of ſurprize to the Britiſh. The latter ſcarcely believed that the former would oppoſe them by land with a regular army, but never ſuſpected that a people, ſo unfurniſhed as they were with many things neceſſary for arming veſſels, would preſume to attempt any thing on water. A ſpirit of enterprize, invigorated by patriotic zeal, prompted the hardy New-Englandmen to undertake the hazardous buſineſs, and their ſucceſs encouraged them to proceed. Before the cloſe of the year, Congreſs determined to build 5 veſſels of Dec. 13.
32 guns, 5 of 28, and 3 of 24. While the Americans were fitting out armed veſſels, and before they had made any captures, an event took place which would have diſpoſed a leſs determined people to deſiſt from provoking the vengeance of the Britiſh navy. This was the burning of Falmouth in the northern parts of Maſſachuſetts. Captain Mowat, in the Canceaux of ſixteen guns, deſtroyed 139 Oct. 18.
houſes, and 278 ſtores, and other buildings in that town.

This ſpread an alarm on the coaſt, but produced no diſpoſition to ſubmit, many moved from the ſea ports with their families and effects, but no ſolicitations were preferred for the obtaining of Britiſh protection.

In a few days after the burning of Falmouth, the old ſouth meeting-houſe in Boſton was taken into poſſeſſion by the Britiſh, and deſtined for a riding-ſchool, and the ſervice of the light dragoons. Theſe proceedings produced in the minds of the Coloniſts a more determined ſpirit of reſiſtance, and a more general averſion to Great Britain.

1775.

CHAP. VIII.

Ticonderoga taken, and Canada invaded.

IT had early occurred to many, that if the ſword decided the controverſy between Great Britain and her Colonies, the poſſeſſion of Ticonderoga would be eſſential to the ſecurity of the latter. Situated on a promontory, formed at the junction of the waters of Lake George and Lake Champlain, it is the key of all communication between New-York and Canada. Meſſrs. Deane, Wooſter, Parſons, Stevens, and others of Connecticut, planned a ſcheme for obtaining poſſeſſion of this valuable poſt. Having procured a loan of 1800 dollars of public money, and provided a ſufficient quantity of powder and ball, they ſet off for Bennington, to obtain the co-operation of Colonel Allen of that place. Two hundred and ſeventy men, moſtly of that brave and hardy people who are called green mountain boys, were ſpeedily collected at Caſtleton, which was fixed on as the place of rendezvous. At this place Colonel Arnold, who, though attended only with a ſervant, was proſecuting the ſame object, unexpectedly joined them. He had been early choſen a captain of a volunteer company, by the inhabitants of New-Haven, among whom he reſided. As ſoon as he received news of the Lexington battle, he marched off with his company for the vicinity of Boſton, and arrived there, though 150 miles diſtant, in a few days. Immediately after his arrival he waited on the Maſſachuſetts Committee of Safety, and informed them, that there were at Ticonderoga many pieces of cannon, and a great quantity of valuable ſtores, and that the fort was in a ruinous condition, and garriſoned only by about 40 men. They appointed him a Colonel, and commiſſioned him to raiſe 400 men, and to take Ticonderoga. The leaders of the party which had previouſly rendezvouſed at Caſtleton, admitted Colonel Arnold to join them, and it was agreed that Colonel Allen ſhould be the commander in chief of the expedition, and that Colonel Arnold ſhould be his aſſiſtant. They proceeded without delay, and arrived in the night at Lake Champlain, oppoſite to Ticonderoga.

Allen

Allen and Arnold croſſed over with 83 men, and landed near the garriſon. They contended who ſhould go in firſt, but it was at laſt agreed that they ſhould both go in together; they advanced abreaſt, and entered the fort at the dawning of day. A ſentry ſnapped his piece at one of them, and then retreated through the covered way to the parade; the Americans followed, and immediately drew up. The commander, ſurpriſed in his bed, was called upon to ſurrender the fort; he aſked by what authority? Colonel Allen replied, "I demand it in the name of the Great Jehovah, and of the Continental Congreſs." No reſiſtance was made, and the fort, with its valuable ſtores, and forty-eight priſoners, fell into the hands of the Americans. The boats had been ſent back for the remainder of the men, but the buſineſs was done before they got over. Colonel Seth Warner was ſent off with a party to take poſſeſſion of Crown Point, where a ſerjeant and 12 men performed garriſon duty. This was ſpeedily effected. The next object calling for the attention of the Americans, was to obtain the command of Lake Champlain; but to accompliſh this, it was neceſſary for them to get poſſeſſion of a ſloop of war, lying at St. John's, at the northern extremity of the lake. With the view of capturing this ſloop it was agreed to man and arm a ſchooner lying at South Bay, and that Arnold ſhould command her, and that Allen ſhould command ſome batteaux on the ſame expedition. A favourable wind carried the ſchooner a-head of the batteaux, and Colonel Arnold got immediate poſſeſſion of the ſloop by ſurpriſe. The wind again favouring him, he returned with his prize to Ticonderoga, and rejoined Colonel Allen. The latter ſoon went home, and the former, with a number of men agreed to remain there in garriſon. In this rapid manner the poſſeſſion of Ticonderoga, and the command of Lake Champlain was obtained, without any loſs, by a few determined men. Intelligence of theſe events was in a few days communicated to Congreſs, which met for the firſt time, at ten o'clock of the ſame day, in the morning of which Ticonderoga was taken. They rejoiced in the ſpirit of enterprize diſplayed by their country-

1775. May 9. May 10.

1775. countrymen, but feared the charge of being aggressors, or of doing any thing to widen the breach between Great Britain and the Colonies; for an accommodation was at that time nearly their unanimous wish. They therefore recommended to the committees of the cities and counties of New-York and Albany, to cause the cannon and stores to be removed from Ticonderoga to the south end of Lake George, and to take an exact inventory of them, "in order that they might be safely returned when the restoration of the former harmony between Great Britain and the Colonies, so ardently wished for by the latter, should render it prudent and consistent with the overruling law of self-preservation."

Colonel Arnold having begun his military career with a series of successes, was urged by his native impetuosity to

June 13. project more extensive operations. He wrote a letter to Congress, strongly urging an expedition into Canada, and offering with 2000 men to reduce the whole province. In his ardent zeal to oppose Great Britain, he had advised the adoption of an offensive war, even before Congress had organised an army or appointed a single military officer. His importunity was at last successful, as shall hereafter be related, but not till two months had elapsed, subsequent to his first proposition of conducting an expedition against Canada. Such was the increasing fervour of the public mind in 1775, that what in the early part of the year was deemed violent and dangerous, was in its progress pronounced both moderate and expedient.

Sir Guy Carleton, the King's Governor in Canada, no sooner heard that the Americans had surprised Ticonderoga and Crown Point, and obtained the command of Lake Champlain, than he planned a scheme for their recovery. Having only a few regular troops under his command, he endeavoured to induce the Canadians and Indians to co-operate with him, but they both declined. He established martial law, that he might compel the inhabitants to take arms. They declared themselves ready to defend the province, but refused to march out of it, or to commence hostilities on their neighbours. Colonel Johnston had, on the same occasion, repeated conferences with the Indians,

Indians, and endeavoured to influence them to take up 1775. the hatchet, but they steadily refused. In order to gain their co-operation, he invited them to feast on a Bostonian, and to drink his blood. This, in the Indian style, meant no more than to partake of a roasted ox and a pipe of wine, at a public entertainment, which was given on design to influence them to co-operate with the British troops. The colonial patriots affected to understand it in its literal sense. It furnished, in their mode of explication, a convenient handle for operating on the passions of the people.

These exertions in Canada, which were principally made with a view to recover Ticonderoga, Crown Point, and the command of Lake Champlain, induced Congress to believe that a formidable invasion of their north western frontier was intended from that quarter: the evident tendency of the Quebec act favoured this opinion. Believing it to be the fixed purpose of the British Ministry to attack the united Colonies on that side, they conceived that they would be inexcusable if they neglected the proper means for warding off so terrible a blow. They were also sensible that the only practicable plan to effect this purpose, was to make a vigorous attack upon Canada, while it was unable to resist the unexpected impression. Their success at Ticonderoga and Crown Point had already paved the way for this bold enterprize, and had broken down the fences which guarded the entrance into that province. On the other hand, they were sensible that by taking this step, they changed at once the whole nature of the war. From defensive it became offensive, and subjected them to the imputation of being the aggressors. They were well aware, that several who had espoused their cause in Britain would probably be offended at this measure, and charge them with heightening the mischiefs occasioned by the dispute. They knew that the principles of resistance, as far as they had hitherto acted upon them, were abetted by a considerable party even in Great Britain; and that to forfeit their good opinion, might be of great disservice. Considerations of this kind made them weigh well the important step be-

1775. fore they ventured upon it. They on the other hand reflected that the eloquence of the minority in Parliament, and the petitions and remonſtrances of the merchants in Great Britain, had produced no ſolid advantages in their favour; and that they had no chance of relief but from the ſmiles of Heaven on their own endeavours. The danger was preſſing. War was not only inevitable, but already begun. To wait till they were attacked by a formidable force at their backs, in the very inſtant when their utmoſt exertions would be requiſite, perhaps inſufficient, to protect their cities and ſea coaſt againſt an invaſion from Britain, would be the ſummit of folly. The laws of war and of nations juſtified the foreſtalling of an enemy. The Coloniſts argued, that to prevent known hoſtile intentions, was a matter of ſelf defence; they were alſo ſenſible they had already gone ſuch lengths as could only be vindicated by arms; and that if a certain degree of ſucceſs did not attend their reſiſtance, they would be at the mercy of an irritated government, and their moderation in the ſingle inſtance of Canada would be an unavailing plea for indulgence. They were alſ oencouraged to proceed, by certain information that the French inhabitants of Canada, except the nobleſſe and the clergy, were as much diſcontented with their preſent ſyſtem of government as even the Britiſh ſettlers. It ſeemed therefore probable, that they would conſider the provincials rather as friends than as enemies. The invaſion of that province was therefore determined upon, if found practicable, and not diſagreeable to the Canadians.

Congreſs had committed the management of their military arragements, in this northern department, to General Schuyler and General Montgomery. While the former remained at Albany, to attend an Indian treaty, the latter was ſent forward to Ticonderoga, with a body of troops from New-York and New-England. Soon after reaching Ticonderoga, he made a movement down Lake Champlain. General Schuyler overtook him at Cape la Motte; from thence they moved on to Iſle aux Noix. About this time General Schuyler addreſſed the inhabitants, informing them, "that the only views of Congreſs

Congreſs were to reſtore to them thoſe rights which every 1775.
ſubject of the Britiſh empire, of whatever religious ſentiments he may be, is entitled to; and that in the execution of theſe truſts he had received the moſt poſitive orders to cheriſh every Canadian and every friend to the cauſe of liberty, and ſacredly to guard their property." The Americans, about 1000 in number, effected a landing at St. John's, which being the firſt Britiſh poſt Sept. 10.
in Canada, lies only 115 miles to the northward of Ticonderoga. The Britiſh piquets were driven into the fort. The environs were then reconnoitered, and the fortifications were found to be much ſtronger than had been ſuſpected. This induced the calling of a council of war, which recommended a retreat to Iſle aux Noix, twelve miles ſouth of St. John's, to throw a boom acroſs the channel, and to erect works for its defence. Soon after this event, an extreme bad ſtate of health induced General Schuyler to retire to Ticonderoga, and the command devolved on General Montgomery.

This enterpriſing officer in a few days returned to the vicinity of St. John's, and opened a battery againſt it. Ammunition was ſo ſcarce that the ſiege could not be carried on with any proſpect of ſpeedy ſucceſs. The General detached a ſmall body of troops to attempt the reduction of fort Chamblee, only ſix miles diſtant. Succeſs attended this enterprize. By its ſurrender ſix tons of gun powder were obtained, which enabled the General to proſecute the ſiege of St. John's with vigour. The garriſon, though ſtraitened for proviſions, perſevered in defending themſelves with unabating fortitude. While General Montgomery was proſecuting this ſiege, the Governor of the province collected at Montreal about 800 men, chiefly militia and Indians. He endeavoured to croſs the river St. Lawrence with this force, and to land at Longueil, intending to proceed thence to attack the beſiegers, but Colonel Warner with 300 green mountain boys and a four-pounder, prevented the execution of the deſign. The Governor's party was ſuffered to come near the ſhore, but was then fired upon with ſuch effect as to make them retire after ſuſtaining great loſs.

1775. An account of this affair being communicated to the garrifon in St. John's, Major Prefton, the commanding officer, furrendered, on receiving honourable terms of capitulation. By thefe it was agreed, that the garrifon fhould march out with the honours of war, that the officers and privates fhould ground their arms on the plain, the officers keep their fide arms, and their fire arms be referved for them, and that the people of the garrifon fhould retain their effects. About 500 regulars and 100 Canadians became prifoners to the provincials. They alfo acquired 39 pieces of cannon, 7 mortars, and 2 howitzers, and about 800 ftand of arms. Among the cannon were many brafs field pieces, an article of which the Americans were nearly deftitute.

While the fiege of St. John's was pending, Colonel Allen, who was returning with about 80 men from a tour on which he had been fent by his General, was captured by the Britifh near Montreal, loaded with irons, and in that condition fent to England. Major Brown had propofed that Colonel Allen fhould return to Lonqueil, procure canoes, and crofs the river St. Lawrence a little to the north of Montreal, while he with a force of about 200 men croffed a little to the fouth of it. The former croffed in the night, but the latter by fome means failed on his part. Colonel Allen found himfelf the next morning unfupported and expofed to immediate danger, but, neverthelefs, concluded on maintaining his ground. General Carleton, knowing his weaknefs, marched out againft him with a fuperior force. The Colonel defended himfelf with his wonted bravery, but being deferted by feveral of his party, and having loft fifteen of his men, he was compelled to furrender with the remainder, amounting to 38.

After the reduction of St. John's, General Montgomery proceeded towards Montreal. The few Britifh forces there, unable to ftand their ground, repaired for fafety on board the fhipping, in hopes of efcaping down the river, but they were prevented by Colonel Eafton, who was ftationed at the point of Sorel river with a number of continental troops, fome cannon, and an armed gondola.

General

General Prefcot, who was on board with feveral officers, and about 120 privates, having no chance to efcape, fubmitted to be prifoners on terms of capitulation. Eleven fail of veffels with all their contents, confifting of ammunition, provifion, and intrenching tools, became the property of the provincials. Governor Carleton was about this time conveyed in a boat with muffled paddles by a fecret way to the Three Rivers, and from thence to Quebec in a few days. 1775.

When Montreal was evacuated by the troops, the inhabitants applied to General Montgomery for a capitulation. He informed them, that as they were defencelefs, they could not expect fuch a conceffion, but he engaged upon his honour to maintain the individuals and religious communities of the city, in the peaceable enjoyment of their property, and the free exercife of their religion. In all his tranfactions, he fpoke, wrote, and acted, with dignity and propriety, and in particular treated the inhabitants with liberality and politenefs.

Montreal, which at this time furrendered to the provincials, carried on an extenfive trade, and contained many of thofe articles, which from the operation of the refolutions of Congrefs could not be imported into any of the united Colonies. From thefe ftores the American foldiers, who had hitherto fuffered from the want of fuitable cloathing, obtained a plentiful fupply.

General Montgomery, after leaving fome troops in Montreal, and fending detachments into different parts of the province to encourage the Canadians, and to forward provifions, advanced towards the capital. His little army arrived with expedition before Quebec. Succefs had hitherto crowned every attempt of General Montgomery, but notwithftanding his fituation was very embarraffing.—Much to be pitied is the officer, who having been bred to arms in the ftrict difcipline of regular armies, is afterwards called to command men who carry with them the fpirit of freedom into the field. The greater part of the Americans, officers as well as foldiers, having never feen any fervice, were ignorant of their duty, and but feebly impreffed with the military ideas of union, fubordination,

1775. ordination, and discipline. The army was continental in name and pay, but in no other respect. Not only the troops of different Colonies conceived themselves independent of each other, but in some instances the different regiments of the same Colony were backward to submit to the orders of officers in a higher grade of another line. They were also soon tired of a military life.— Novelty and the first impulse of passion had led them to camp; but the approaching cold season, together with the fatigues and dangers incident to war, induced a general wish to relinquish the service. Though by the terms of their enlistment, they were to be discharged in a few weeks, they could not brook an absence from their homes for that short space of time. The ideas of liberty and independence, which roused the Colonists to oppose the claims of Great Britain, operated against that implicit obedience which is necessary to a well-regulated army.

Even in European states, where long habits have established submission to superiors as a primary duty of the common people, the difficulty of governing recruits, when first led to the field from civil occupations, is great; but to exercise discipline over freemen, accustomed to act only from the impulse of their own minds, required not only a knowledge of human nature, but an accommodating spirit, and a degree of patience which is rarely found among officers of regular armies. The troops under the immediate command of General Montgomery, were, from their usual habits, averse to the ideas of subordination, and had suddenly passed from domestic ease, to the numberless wants and distresses which are incident to marches through strange and desert countries. Every difficulty was increased by the short term for which they were enlisted. To secure the affections of the Canadians, it was necessary for the American General to restrain the appetites, and control the licentiousness of his soldiery, while the appearance of military harshness was dangerous, lest their good will might be forfeited. In this choice of difficulties, the genius of Montgomery surmounted many obstacles. During his short but glori-

ous

ous career, he conducted himself with so much prudence, as to make it doubtful whether we ought to admire most the goodness of the man or the address of the general. 1775.

About the same time that Canada was invaded, in the usual route from New-York, a considerable detachment from the American army at Cambridge was conducted into that royal province by a new and unexpected passage. Colonel Arnold, who successfully conducted this bold undertaking, thereby acquired the name of the American Hannibal. He was detached with a thousand men from Cambridge to penetrate into Canada, by ascending the Sept. 13. river Kennebeck, and descending by the Chaundiere to the river St. Lawrence. Great were the difficulties these troops had to encounter in marching by an unexplored route 300 miles through an uninhabited country. In ascending the Kennebeck, they were constantly obliged to work upwards against an impetuous current. They were often compelled by cataracts or other impediments, to land and to haul their batteaux up rapid streams and over falls of rivers. Nor was their march by land more eligible than this passage by water. They had deep swamps, thick woods, difficult mountains, and craggy precipices alternatively to encounter. At some places they had to cut their way for miles together through forests so embarrassed, that their progress was only four or five miles a day. The constant fatigue caused many men to fall sick. One third of the number which set out were, from want of necessaries, obliged to return; the others proceeded with unabated fortitude and constancy. Provisions grew at length so scarce, that some of the men eat their dogs, cartouch boxes, breeches, and shoes. When they were an hundred miles from any habitation or prospect of a supply their whole store was divided, which yielded four pints of flour for each man. After they had baked and eaten their last morsel, they had thirty miles to travel before they could expect any farther supply. The men bore up under these complicated distresses with the greatest fortitude. They gloried in the hope of completing a march which would rival the fame of similar expeditions undertaken by the heroes of antiquity.

Having

1775. Having ſpent thirty-one days in traverſing a hideous wilderneſs, without ever ſeeing any thing human, they at length reached the inhabited parts of Canada. They were there well received, and ſupplied with every thing neceſſary for their comfort. The Canadians were ſtruck with amazement when they ſaw this armed force emerging from the wilderneſs. It had never entered their conceptions that it was poſſible for human beings to traverſe ſuch immenſe wilds. The moſt pointed inſtructions had been given to this corps, to conciliate the affections of the Canadians. It was particularly enjoined upon them, if the ſon of Lord Chatham, then an officer in one of the Britiſh regiments in that province, ſhould fall into their hands, to treat him with all poſſible attention, in return for the great exertions of his father in behalf of American liberty. A manifeſto ſubſcribed by General Waſhington, which had been ſent from Cambridge with this detachment, was circulated among the inhabitants of Canada. In this they were invited to arrange themſelves under the ſtandard of general liberty; and they were informed that the American army was ſent into the province, not to plunder, but to protect them.

While General Montgomery lay at Montreal, Colonel Nov. 8. Arnold arrived at Point Levy oppoſite to Quebec. Such was the conſternation of the garriſon and inhabitants at his unexpected appearance, that had not the river intervened, an immediate attack in the firſt ſurprize and confuſion, might have been ſucceſsful. The bold enterpriſe of one American army marching through the wilderneſs, at a time when ſucceſs was crowning every undertaking of another invading in a different direction, ſtruck terror into the breaſts of thoſe Canadians who were unfriendly to the deſigns of Congreſs. The embarraſſments of the garriſon were increaſed by the abſence of Sir Guy Carleton; that gallant officer, on hearing of Montgomery's invaſion, prepared to oppoſe him in the extremes of the province. While he was collecting a force to attack invaders in one direction, a different corps, emerging out of the depths of an unexplored wilderneſs, ſuddenly appeared from another. In a few days after Colonel Arnold had

had arrived at Point Levy, he croffed the river St. Lawrence, but his chance of fucceeding by a coup de main was in that fhort fpace greatly diminifhed. The critical moment was paft. The panic occafioned by his firft appearance had abated, and folid preparations for the defence of the town were adopted. The inhabitants, both Englifh and Canadians, as foon as danger preffed, united for their common defence. Alarmed for their property, they were, at their own requeft, embodied for its fecurity. The failors were taken from the fhipping in the harbour, and put to the batteries on fhore. As Colonel Arnold had no artillery, after parading fome days on the heights near Quebec, he drew off his troops, intending nothing more until the arrival of Montgomery, then to cut off fupplies from entering the garrifon. 1775.

So favourable were the profpects of the united Colonies at this period, that General Montgomery fet on foot a regiment of Canadians, to be in the pay of Congrefs. James Livingfton, a native of New-York, who had long refided in Canada, was appointed to the command thereof, and feveral recruits were engaged for the term of twelve months. The inhabitants on both fides of the river St. Lawrence were very friendly; expreffes in the employ of the Americans went without moleftation backwards and forwards between Montreal and Quebec. Many individuals performed fignal fervices in favour of the invading army. Among a confiderable number Mr. Price ftands confpicuous, who advanced 5000l. in fpecie for their ufe.

Various caufes had contributed to attach the inhabitants of Canada, efpecially thofe of the inferior claffes, to the intereft of Congrefs, and to alienate their affections from the government of Great Britain. The conteft was for liberty, and there is fomething in that found captivating to the mind of man in a ftate of original fimplicity. It was for the Colonies, and Canada was alfo a Colony. The objects of the war were therefore fuppofed to be for their common advantage. The form of government lately impofed on them by act of Parliament, was far from being fo free as the conftitutions of the other Colonies,

1775. Colonies, and was in many respects particularly oppressive. The common people had no representative share in enacting the laws by which they were to be governed, and were subjected to the arbitrary will of persons over whom they had no constitutional control. Distinctions so degrading was not unobserved by the native Canadians, but were more obvious to those who had known the privileges enjoyed in the neighbouring provinces. Several individuals educated in New-England and New-York, with the high ideas of liberty inspired by their free constitutions, had, in the interval between the peace of Paris 1763, and the commencement of the American war, migrated into Canada. Such sensibly felt the difference between the governments they had left, and the arbitrary constitution imposed on them, and both from principle and affection, earnestly persuaded the Canadians to make a common cause with the united Colonies.

Though motives of this kind induced the peasantry of the country to espouse the interest of Congress, yet sundry individuals, and some whole orders of men, threw the weight of their influence into the opposite scale. The legal privileges which the Roman Catholic clergy enjoyed, made them averse to a change, lest they should be endangered by a more intimate connection with their protestant neighbours. They used their influence in the next world, as an engine to operate on the movements of the present. They refused absolution to such of their flocks as abetted the Americans. This interdiction of the joys of Heaven, by those who were supposed to hold the keys of it, operated powerfully on the opinions and practices of the superstitious multitude. The seigneurs had also immunities unknown in the other Colonies. Such is the fondness for power in every human breast, that revolutions are rarely favoured by any order of men who have reason to apprehend that their future situation will, in case of a change, be less pre-eminent than before. The sagacious General Montgomery, no less a man of the world than an officer, discovered great address in accommodating himself to these clashing interests. Though he knew the part the popish clergy had acted in opposition

to him, yet he conducted towards them as if totally ignorant of the matter; and treated them and their religion with great respect and attention. As far as he was authorised to promise, he engaged that their ecclesiastical property should be secured, and the free exercise of their religion continued. To all he held forth the flattering idea of calling a convention of representatives, freely chosen, to institute by its own will, such a form of government as they approved. While the great mind of this illustrious man was meditating schemes of liberty and happiness, a military force was collecting and training to oppose him, which in a short time put a period to his valuable life. 1775.

At the time the Americans were before Montreal, General Carleton, as has been related, escaped through their hands, and got safe to Quebec. His presence was itself a garrison. The confidence reposed in his talents, inspired the men under his command to make the most determined resistence. Soon after his arrival he issued a proclamation, setting forth, "That all persons liable to do militia duty, and residing in Quebec, who refused to arm in conjunction with the royal army, should in four days quit Quebec with their families, and withdraw themselves from the limits of the district by the first of December, on pain of being treated afterwards as spies or rebels." All who were unwilling to co-operate with the British army, being thus disposed of, the remaining inhabitants, though unused to arms, became in a little time so far acquainted with them as to be very useful in defending the town. They supported fatigues, and submitted to command with a patience and cheerfulness that could not be exceeded by men familiarized to the hardships and subordination of a military life.

General Montgomery having effected at Point aux Trembles a junction with Colonel Arnold, commenced the siege of Quebec. Upon his arrival before the town, he wrote a letter to the British Governor, recommending an immediate surrender, to prevent the dreadful consequences of a storm. Though the flag which conveyed this letter was fired upon, and all communication refused, Dec. 1.

 General

1775. General Montgomery found other means to convey a letter of the fame tenor into the garrifon, but the inflexible firmnefs of the Governor could not be moved either by threats or dangers. The Americans foon after commenced a bombardment with five fmall mortars, but with very little effect. In a few days General Montgomery opened a fix gun battery, at the diftance of feven hundred yards from the walls, but his metal was too light to make any impreffion.

The news of General Montgomery's fuccefs in Canada, had filled the Colonies with expectations that the conqueft of Quebec would foon add frefh luftre to his already brilliant fame. He knew well the confequences of popular difappointment, and was, befides, of opinion, that unlefs fomething decifive was immediately done, the bufinefs of his previous acquifitions would in a great degree be loft to the American caufe. On both accounts he was ftrongly impelled to make every exertion for fatisfying the expectations and promoting the intereft of a people who had honoured him with fo great a fhare of their confidence. The government of Great Britain, in the extenfive province of Canada, was at that time reduced to the fingle town of Quebec. The aftonifhed world faw peaceful Colonifts fuddenly transformed into foldiers, and thefe marching through unexplored wilderneffes, and extending themfelves by conquefts, in the firft moment after they had affumed the profeffion of arms. Towards the end of the year, the tide of fortune began to turn. Diffentions broke out between Colonel Arnold and fome of his officers, threatening the annihilation of difcipline. The continental currency had no circulation in Canada, and all the hard money furnifhed for the expedition was nearly expended.—Difficulties of every kind were daily increafing. The extremities of fatigue were conftantly to be encountered. The American General had not a fufficient number of men to make proper reliefs in the daily labours they underwent; and that inconfiderable number, worn down with toil, was conftantly expofed to the feverities of a Canada winter. The period for which a great part of his men had enlifted, being on the point of expiration, he

he apprehended that they who were entitled to it, would insist on their discharge. On the other hand, he saw no prospect of staggering the resolution of the garrison; they were well supplied with every thing necessary for their defence, and were daily acquiring additional firmness. The extremity of winter was fast approaching. From these combined circumstances, General Montgomery was impressed with a conviction, that the siege should either be raised, or brought to a summary termination. To storm the place was the only feasible method of effecting the latter purpose; but this was an undertaking, in which success was but barely possible. Great minds are seldom exact calculators of danger; nor do they minutely attend to the difficulties which obstruct the attainment of their objects. Fortune, in contempt of the pride of man, has ever had an influence in the success or failure of military enterprises. Some of the greatest atchievements of that kind have owed their success to a noble contempt of common forms. 1775.

The upper part of Quebec was surrounded with very strong works, and the access from the lower town was excessively difficult, from its almost perpendicular steepness. General Montgomery, from a native intrepidity, and an ardent thirst for glory, overlooked all these dangers, and resolved at once either to carry the place or perish in the attempt. Trusting much to his good fortune, confiding in the bravery of his troops, and their readiness to follow whithersoever he should lead, and depending somewhat on the extensiveness of the works, he determined to attempt the town by escalade.

The garrison of Quebec at this time consisted of about 1520 men, of which 800 were militia, and 450 were seamen belonging to the King's frigates, or merchants ships in the harbour. The rest were marines, regulars, or Colonel Maclean's new-raised emigrants. The American army consisted of about 800 men. Some had been left at Montreal, and near a third of Arnold's detachment, as has been related, had returned to Cambridge.

General Montgomery having divided this little force into four detachments, ordered two feints to be made against

1775. against the upper town, one by Colonel Livingston, at the head of the Canadians, against St. John's Gate; and the other by Major Brown, against Cape Diamond, reserving to himself and Colonel Arnold the two principal attacks against the lower town. At five o'clock in the morning General Montgomery advanced against the lower Dec. 31. town. He passed the first barrier, and was just opening to attack the second, when he was killed, together with his aid de camp, Captain John M'Pherson, Captain Cheesman, and some others. This so dispirited the men that Colonel Campbell, on whom the command devolved, thought proper to draw them off. In the mean time Colonel Arnold, at the head of about 350 men, passed through St. Roques, and approached near a two-gun battery, without being discovered. This he attacked, and though it was well defended, carried it, but with considerable loss. In this attack Colonel Arnold received a wound, which made it necessary to carry him off the field of battle. His party nevertheless continued the assault, and pushing on, made themselves masters of a second barrier. These brave men sustained the force of the whole garrison for three hours, but finding themselves hemmed in, and without hopes either of success, relief, or retreat, they yielded to numbers, and the advantageous situation of their adversaries. The loss of the Americans, in killed and wounded, was about 100, and 300 were taken prisoners. Among the slain were Captain Kendricks, Lieutenant Humphries, and Lieutenant Cooper. The behaviour of the provincial troops was such as might have silenced those who had reproached them for being deficient in courage. The most experienced veterans could not have exceeded the firmness they displayed in their last attack. The issue of this assault relieved the garrison of Quebec from all apprehensions for its safety. The provincials were so much weakened, as to be scarcely equal to their own defence. However, Colonel Arnold had the boldness to encamp within three miles of the town, and had the address, even with his reduced numbers, to impede the conveyance of refreshments and provisions into the garrison. His situation was extremely difficult. He was at

at an immenſe diſtance from thoſe parts where effectual aſſiſtance could be expected. On his firſt entrance into the province, he had experienced much kind treatment from the inhabitants. The Canadians, beſides being fickle in their reſolutions, are apt to be biaſſed by ſucceſs. Their diſpoſition to aid the Americans became therefore daily more precarious. It was even difficult to keep the provincial troops from returning to their reſpective homes. Their ſufferings were great. While their adverſaries were comfortably houſed in Quebec, they were expoſed in the open air to the extreme rigour of the ſeaſon. The ſeverity of a Canada winter was far beyond any thing with which they were acquainted. The ſnow lay above four feet deep on a level. 1775.

This deliverance of Quebec may be conſidered as a proof how much may be done by one man for the preſervation of a country. It alſo proves that ſoldiers may in a ſhort time be formed out of the maſs of citizens.

The conflict being over, the ill will which had ſubſiſted, during the ſiege, between the royal and provincial troops gave way to ſentiments of humanity. The Americans, who ſurrendered, were treated with kindneſs. Ample proviſions were made for their wounded, and no unneceſſary ſeverity ſhewn to any. Few men have ever fallen in battle ſo much regretted by both ſides as General Montgomery. His many amiable qualities had procured him an uncommon ſhare of private affection, and his great abilities an equal proportion of public eſteem. Being a ſincere lover of liberty, he had engaged in the American cauſe from principle, and quitted the enjoyment of an eaſy fortune, and the higheſt domeſtic felicity, to take an active ſhare in the fatigues and dangers of a war, inſtituted for the defence of the community of which he was an adopted member. His well-known character was almoſt equally eſteemed by the friends and foes of the ſide which he had eſpouſed. In America he was celebrated as a martyr to the liberties of mankind; in Great Britain as a miſguided good man, ſacrificing to what he ſuppoſed to be the rights of his country. His name was mentioned in Parliament with ſingular reſpect. Some of the moſt powerful

1775. powerful ſpeakers in that illuſtrious Aſſembly, diſplayed their eloquence in ſounding his praiſe and lamenting his fate. Thoſe in particular who had been his fellow ſoldiers in the late war, expatiated on his many virtues. The Miniſter himſelf acknowledged his worth, while he reprobated the cauſe for which he fell. He concluded an involuntary panegyric, by ſaying, "Curſe on his virtues, they have undone his country."

Though the invaſion of Canada was finally unſucceſsful, yet the advantages which the Americans gained in the months of September and October gave freſh ſpirits to their army and people. The boldneſs of the enterpriſe might have taught Great Britain the folly of perſiſting in the deſign of ſubjugating America. But inſtead of preſerving the union, and reſtoring the peace of the empire by repealing a few of her laws, ſhe, from miſtaken dignity, reſolved on a more vigorous proſecution of the war.

CHAP. IX.

Tranſactions in Virginia, the Carolinas, Georgia, and the general State of Public Affairs in the Colonies.

IT has already been mentioned, that the Coloniſts from the riſing of Congreſs in October 1774, and particularly after the Lexington battle, were attentive to the training their militia, and making the neceſſary preparations for their defence.

The effects of their arrangements for this purpoſe varied with circumſtances.

Where there were no royal troops, and where ordinary prudence was obſerved, the public peace was undiſturbed. In other caſes, the intemperate zeal of governors, and the imprudent warmth of the people, anticipated the calamities of war before its proper time. Virginia, though there was not a ſingle Britiſh ſoldier within its limits, was, by the indiſcretion of its Governor, Lord Dunmore, involved, for ſeveral months, in difficulties, but little ſhort of thoſe to which the inhabitants of Maſſachuſetts were

ſubjected. His Lordſhip was but illy fitted to be at the helm in this tempeſtuous ſeaſon. His paſſions predominated over his underſtanding, and precipitated him into meaſures injurious both to the people whom he governed, and to the intereſt of his royal maſter. The Virginians from the earlieſt ſtages of the controverſy had been in the foremoſt line of oppoſition to the claims of Great Britain, but at the ſame time treated Lord Dunmore with the attention that was due to his ſtation. In common with the other provinces they had taken effectual meaſures to prepare their militia for the purpoſes of defence. 1775.

While they were purſuing this object, his Lordſhip engaged a party belonging to a royal veſſel in James' River, to convey ſome public powder from a magazine in Williamſburg on board their ſhip. The value or quantity of the powder was inconſiderable, but the circumſtances attending its removal begat ſuſpicions that Lord Dunmore meant to deprive the inhabitants of the means of defence. They were therefore alarmed, and aſſembled with arms to demand its reſtitution. By the interpoſition of the mayor and corporation of Williamſburg extremities were prevented. Reports were ſoon after ſpread that a ſecond attempt to rob the magazine was intended. The inhabitants again took arms, and inſtituted nightly patroles, with a determined reſolution to protect it. The Governor was irritated at theſe commotions, and in the warmth of his temper threatened to ſet up the royal ſtandard—enfranchiſe the negroes, and arm them againſt their maſters. This irritated, but did not intimidate. Several public meetings were held in the different counties, in all of which the removal of the powder from the magazine, and the Governor's threats, were ſeverely condemned. Some of the gentlemen of Hanover and the neighbouring counties aſſembled in arms, under the conduct of Mr. Patrick Henry, and marched towards Williamſburg, with an avowed deſign to obtain reſtitution of the powder, and to take meaſures for ſecuring the public treaſury. This ended in a negociation, by which it was agreed, that payment for the powder, by the Apr. 20.

1775. the receiver general of the Colony, ſhould be accepted in lieu of reſtitution; and that upon the engagement of the inhabitants of Williamſburg to guard both the treaſury and the magazine, the armed parties ſhould return to their habitations.

The alarm of this affair induced Lord Dunmore to ſend his lady and family on board the Fowey man of war in James' River. About the ſame time his Lordſhip, with the aſſiſtance of a detachment of marines, fortified his palace and ſurrounded it with artillery. He ſoon after iſſued a proclamation, in which Mr. Henry and his aſſociates were charged with rebellious practices, and the preſent commotions were attributed to a deſire in the people of changing the eſtabliſhed form of government. Several meetings were held in the neighbouring counties, in which the conduct of Mr. Henry and of his aſſociates was applauded, and reſolutions were adopted, that at every riſque he and they ſhould be indemnified. About this times copies of ſome letters from Governor Dunmore to the Miniſter of the American department were made public. Theſe in the opinion of the Virginians contained unfair and unjuſt repreſentations of facts, and alſo of their temper and diſpoſition. Many ſevere things were ſaid on both ſides, and fame, as uſual, magnified or miſrepreſented whatever was ſaid or done. One diſtruſt begat another. Every thing tended to produce a ſpirit of diſcontent, and the fever of the public mind daily increaſed.

In this ſtate of diſorder the Governor convened the General Aſſembly. The leading motive for this unexpected meaſure was to procure their approbation and acceptance of the terms of the conciliatory motion agreed to in Parliament, on the 20th of the preceding February. His Lordſhip introduced this to their conſideration, in a long and plauſible ſpeech. In a few days they preſented their addreſs in anſwer, in which, among other grounds of rejection, they ſtated that, "the propoſed plan only changed the form of oppreſſion without leſſening its burthen;" but they referred the papers for a final determination to Congreſs. For themſelves they declared,

"We

1775.

"We have exhausted every mode of application which our invention could suggest, as proper and promising. We have decently remonstrated with Parliament: they have added new injuries to the old. We have wearied our King with supplications: he has not deigned to answer us. We have appealed to the native honour and justice of the British nation: their efforts in our favour have been hitherto ineffectual."

The Assembly, among their first acts, appointed a committee to inquire into the causes of the late disturbances, and particularly to examine the state of the magazine. They found most of the remaining powder buried; the muskets deprived of their locks, and spring guns planted in the magazine. These discoveries irritated the people, and occasioned intemperate expressions of resentment. Lord Dunmore quitted the palace privately, and May 8. retired on board the Fowey man of war, which then lay near York-Town. He left a message for the House of Burgesses, acquainting them "that he thought it prudent to retire to a place of safety, having reason to believe that he was in constant danger of falling a sacrifice to popular fury; he nevertheless hoped they would proceed in the great business before them; and he engaged to render the communication between him and the house as easy and as safe as possible. He assured them that he would attend as heretofore, to the duties of his office, and that he was well disposed to restore that harmony which had been unhappily interrupted."

This message produced a joint address from the Council and House of Burgesses, in which they represented his Lordship's fears to be groundless, and declared their willingness to concur in any measure he would propose for the security of himself and family; and concluded by intreating his return to the palace. Lord Dunmore in a reply, justified his apprehensions of danger from the threats which had been repeatedly thrown out. He charged the House of Burgesses with countenancing the violent proceedings of the people, and with a design to usurp the executive power, and subvert the constitution. This produced a reply fraught with recrimination and defensive

 arguments.

1775. arguments. Every incident afforded fresh room for altercation. There was a continued intercourse by addresses, messages, and answers, between the House of Burgesses and the Fowey, but little of the public business was completed. His Lordship was still acknowledged as the lawful governor of the province, but did not think proper to set his foot on shore, in the country over which his functions were to be exercised.

At length, when the necessary bills were ready for ratification, the Council and Burgesses jointly entreated the Governor's presence to give his assent to them and finish the session. After several messages and answers, Lord Dunmore peremptorily refused to meet the Assembly at the capital, their usual place of deliberation; but said he would be ready to receive them on the next Monday, at his present residence on board the Fowey, for the purpose of giving his assent to such bills as he should approve of. Upon receiving this answer, the House of Burgesses passed resolutions in which they declared, that the message requiring them to attend the Governor on board a ship of war, was a high breach of their rights and privileges—that they had reason to fear a dangerous attack was meditated against the Colony, and it was therefore their opinion, that they should prepare for the preservation of their rights and liberties. After strongly professing loyalty to the King, and amity to the Mother Country, they broke up their session. The royal go-
July 18. vernment in Virginia from that day ceased. Soon after, a Convention of Delegates was appointed to supply the place of the Assembly. As these had an unlimited confidence reposed in them, they became at once possessed of undefined discretionary powers, both legislative and executive. They exercised this authority for the security of their constituents. They raised and embodied an armed force, and took other measures for putting the Colony in a state of defence. They published a justification of their conduct, and set forth the necessity of the measures they had adopted. They concluded with professions of loyalty, and declared that though they were determined at every hazard to maintain their rights and privileges,

vileges, it was alſo their fixed reſolution to diſband ſuch forces as were raiſed for the defence of the Colony, whenever their dangers were removed. The headſtrong paſſions of Lord Dunmore precipitated him into farther follies. With the aid of the loyaliſts, run-away negroes, and ſome frigates that were on the ſtation, he eſtabliſhed a marine force. By degrees, he equipped and armed a number of veſſels of different kinds and ſizes, in one of which he conſtantly reſided, except when he went on ſhore in a hoſtile manner. This force was calculated only for depredation, and never became equal to any eſſential ſervice. Obnoxious perſons were ſeized and taken on board; negroes were carried off, plantations ravaged, and houſes burnt. Theſe proceedings occaſioned the ſending of ſome detachments of the new-raiſed provincial forces to protect the coaſts. This produced a predatory war, from which neither honour nor benefit could be acquired, and in which every neceſſary from on ſhore was purchaſed at the riſk of blood. The forces under his Lordſhip attempted to burn Hampton; but the crews of the royal veſſels employed in that buſineſs, though they had begun to cannonade it, were ſo annoyed by riflemen from on ſhore, that they were obliged to quit their ſtation. In a few days after this repulſe, a proclamation was iſſued by the Governor, dated on board the ſhip William, off Norfolk, declaring, that as the civil law was at preſent inſufficient to puniſh treaſon and traitors, martial law ſhould take place and be executed throughout the Colony; and requiring all perſons capable of bearing arms to repair to his Majeſty's ſtandard, or to be conſidered as traitors. He alſo declared all indented ſervants, negroes, and others, appertaining to rebels, who were able and willing to bear arms, and who joined his Majeſty's forces, to be free.

1775. Oct. 25. Nov. 7.

Among the circumſtances which induced the rulers of Great Britain to count on an eaſy conqueſt of America, the great number of ſlaves had a conſiderable weight. On the ſea coaſt of five of the moſt ſouthern provinces, the number of ſlaves exceeded that of freemen. It was ſuppoſed, that the proffer of freedom would detach them

from

1775. from their maſter's intereſt, and bind them by ſtrong ties to ſupport the royal ſtandard. Perhaps, under favourable circumſtances, theſe expectations would in ſome degree have been realiſed; but Lord Dunmore's indiſcretion deprived his royal maſter of this reſources. Six months had elapſed ſince his Lordſhip firſt threatened its adoption. The negroes had in a great meaſure ceaſed to believe, and the inhabitants to fear. It excited leſs ſurprize, and produced leſs effect, than if it had been more immediate and unexpected. The country was now in a tolerable ſtate of defence, and the force for protecting the negroes, in caſe they had cloſed with his Lordſhip's offer, was far ſhort of what would have been neceſſary for their ſecurity. The injury done the royal cauſe by the bare propoſal of the ſcheme, far outweighed any advantage that reſulted from it. The Coloniſts were ſtruck with horror, and filled with deteſtation of a government which was exerciſed in looſening the bands of ſociety, and deſtroying domeſtic ſecurity. The union and vigour which was given to their oppoſition was great, while the additional force acquired by his Lordſhip was inconſiderable. It, nevertheleſs, produced ſome effect in Norfolk and the adjoining country, where his Lordſhip was joined by ſeveral hundreds, both whites and blacks. The Governor having once more got footing on the main, amuſed himſelf with hopes of acquiring the glory of reducing one part of the province by means of the other. The provincials had now an object againſt which they might direct their arms. An expedition was therefore concerted againſt the force which had taken poſt at Norfolk. To protect his adherents Lord Dunmore conſtructed a fort at the great bridge, on the Norfolk ſide, and furniſhed it with artillery. The provincials alſo fortified themſelves near to the ſame place, with a narrow cauſeway in their front. In this ſtate both parties continued

Dec. 9. quiet for ſome days. The royaliſts commenced an attack. Captain Fordyce, at the head of about 60 Britiſh grenadiers, paſſed the cauſeway, and boldly marched up to the provincial entrenchments with fixed bayonets. They were expoſed without cover to the fire of the provincials in

in front, and enfiladed by another part of their works. 1775.
The brave captain and ſeveral of his men fell; the lieutenant, with others, were taken, and all who ſurvived were wounded. The ſlaves in this engagement were more prejudicial to their Britiſh employers than to the provincials. Captain Fordyce was interred by the victors with military honors. The Engliſh priſoners were treated with kindneſs, but the Americans who had joined the King's ſtandard, experienced the reſentment of their countrymen.

The royal forces, on the enſuing night, evacuated their poſt at the great bridge, and Lord Dunmore ſhortly after abandoned Norfolk, and retired with his people on board his ſhips. Many of the Tories, a name which was given to thoſe who adhered to the royal intereſt, ſought the ſame aſylum for themſelves and moveable effects. The provincials took poſſeſſion of Norfolk, and the fleet, with its new incumbrances, moved to a greater diſtance. The people on board, cut off from all peaceable intercourſe with the ſhore, were diſtreſſed for proviſions and neceſſaries of every kind. This occaſioned ſundry unimportant conteſts between the provincial forces and the armed ſhips and boats. At length, on the arrival of the Liverpool man of war from England, a flag was ſent on ſhore to put the queſtion, whether they would ſupply his Majeſty's ſhips with proviſions? An anſwer was returned in the negative. It was then determined to deſtroy the town. This was carried into effect, and Norfolk was reduced to aſhes. The whole loſs was eſtimated at 300,000l. ſterling. The provincials, to deprive the ſhips Jan. 1. of every reſource of ſupply, deſtroyed the houſes and 1776. plantations that were near the water, and obliged the people to move their cattle, proviſions, and effects, farther into the country. Lord Dunmore, with his fleet, continued for ſeveral months on the coaſt and in the rivers of Virginia. His unhappy followers ſuffered a complication of diſtreſſes. The ſcarcity of water and proviſions, the cloſeneſs and filth of the ſmall veſſels, produced diſeaſes which were fatal to many, eſpecially to the negroes. Though his whole force was trifling when compared with the

1776. the resources of Virginia, yet the want of suitable armed vessels made its expulsion impracticable. The experience of that day evinced the inadequacy of land forces for the defence of a maritime country; and the extensive mischief which may be done by even an inconsiderable marine, when unopposed in its own way. The want of a navy was both seen and felt. Some arrangements to procure one were therefore made. Either the expectation of an attack from this quarter, or the sufferings of the crews on board, induced his Lordship, in the summer 1776, to burn the least valuable of his vessels, and to send the remainder, amounting to 30 or 40 sail, to Florida, Bermuda, and the West Indies. The hopes which Lord Dunmore had entertained of subduing Virginia by the co-operation of the negroes terminated with this movement. The unhappy Africans who had engaged in it are said to have almost universally perished.

While these transactions were carrying on, another scheme, in which Lord Dunmore was a party, in like manner miscarried. It was in contemplation to raise a considerable force at the back of the Colonies, particularly in Virginia and the Carolinas. One Connelly, a native of Pennsylvania, was the framer of the design. He had gained the approbation of Lord Dunmore, and had been sent by him to General Gage at Boston, and from him he received a commission to act as colonel commandant. It was intended that the British garrisons at Detroit, and some other remote posts, with their artillery and ammunition, should be subservient to this design. Connelly also hoped for the aid of the Canadians and Indians. He was authorised to grant commissions, and to have the supreme direction of the new forces. As soon as they were in readiness he was to penetrate through Virginia, and to meet Lord Dunmore near Alexandria, on the river Potowmac. Connelly was taken up on suspicion, by one of the committees in Maryland, while on his way to the scene of action. The papers found in his possession betrayed the whole. Among these was a general sketch of the plan, and a letter from Lord Dunmore to one of the Indian chiefs. He was imprisoned,

foned, and the papers publifhed. So many fortunate 1776.
efcapes induced a belief among ferious Americans, that their caufe was favoured by Heaven. The various projects which were devifed and put in operation againft them, pointed out the increafing neceffity of union, while the havock made on their coafts, the proffer of freedom to their flaves, and the encouragement propofed to Indians for making war on their frontier inhabitants, quickened their refentment againft Great Britain.

North-Carolina was more fortunate than Virginia. The Governors of both were perhaps equally zealous for the royal intereft, and the people of both equally attached to the caufe of America, but the former efcaped with a fmaller portion of public calamity. Several regulations were at this time adopted by moft of the provinces. Councils of fafety, committees, and conventions, were common fubftitutes for regular government. Similar plans for raifing, arming, and fupporting troops, and for training the militia, were from north to fouth generally adopted. In like manner royal Governors throughout the provinces were exerting themfelves in attaching the people to the fchemes of Great Britain. Governor Martin, of North-Carolina, was particularly zealous in this bufinefs: he fortified and armed his palace at Newbern, that it might anfwer the double purpofe of a garrifon and magazine. While he was thus employed, fuch commotions were excited among the people, that he thought it expedient to retire on board a floop of war in Cape Fear river. The people, on examining, found powder and various military ftores which had been buried in his garden and yard. Governor Martin, though he had abandoned his ufual place of refidence, continued his exertions for reducing North-Carolina to obedience. He particularly addreffed himfelf to the regulators and Highland emigrants. The former had acquired this name from their attempting to regulate the adminiftration of juftice in the remote fettlements, in a fummary manner fubverfive of the public peace. They had fuffered the confequences of oppofing royal government, and from obvious principles of human nature, were difpofed to fup-

1776. ſupport the authority whoſe power to puniſh they had recently experienced. The Highland emigrants had been but a ſhort time in America, and were yet more under the influence of Europeean ideas than thoſe which their new ſituation was calculated to inſpire. Governor Martin ſent commiſſions among theſe people for raiſing and commanding regiments; and he granted one to Mr. M'Donald to act as their general. He alſo ſent them a proclamation, commanding all perſons, on their allegiance, to repair to the royal ſtandard. This was erected by General M'Donald, about the middle of February. Upon the firſt intelligence of their aſſembling, Brigadier-general Moore, with ſome provincial troops and militia, and ſome pieces of cannon, marched to oppoſe them. He took poſſeſſion of Rock Fiſh Bridge, and threw up ſome works. He had not been there many days when M'Donald approached, and ſent a letter to Moore, incloſing the Governor's proclamation, and adviſing him and his party to join the King's ſtandard; and adding, that in caſe of refuſal they muſt be treated as enemies. To this Moore replied, that he and his officers conſidered themſelves as engaged in a cauſe the moſt glorious and honourable in the world, the defence of mankind; and in his turn offered, that if M'Donald's party laid down their arms they ſhould be received as friends, but, otherwiſe they muſt expect conſequences ſimilar to thoſe which they threatened. Soon after this General M'Donald, with his adherents, puſhed on to join Governor Martin, but Colonels Lillington and Caſwell, with about 1000 militia men, took poſſeſſion of Moore's Creek Bridge, which lay in their way, and raiſed a ſmall breaſt-work to ſecure themſelves.

1776. Feb. 27. On the next morning the Highland emigrants attacked the militia poſted at the bridge, but M'Cleod, the ſecond in command, and ſome more of their officers being killed at the firſt onſet, they fled with precipitation. General M'Donald was taken priſoner, and the whole of his party broken and diſperſed. This overthrow produced conſequences very injurious to the Britiſh intereſt. A royal fleet and army was expected on the coaſt. A junction

junction formed between them and the Highland emigrants in the interior country, might have made a ſenſible impreſſion on the province. From an eagerneſs to do ſomething, the inſurgents prematurely took arms, and being cruſhed before the arrival of proper ſupport, their ſpirits were ſo entirely broken, that no future effort could be expected from them. 1776.

While the war raged only in Maſſachuſetts, each province conducted itſelf as under the expectation of being next attacked. Georgia, though a majority of its inhabitants were at firſt againſt the meaſures, yet about the middle of this year, joined the other Colonies. Having not concurred in the petitions from Congreſs to the King, they petitioned by themſelves, and ſtated their rights and grievances, in firm and decided language. They alſo adopted the continental aſſociation, and ſent on their deputies to Congreſs.

In South-Carolina there was an eagerneſs to be prepared for defence, which was not ſurpaſſed in any of the provinces. Regiments were raiſed—forts were built—the militia trained, and every neceſſary preparation made for that purpoſe. Lord William Campbell, the royal Governor, endeavoured to form a party for the ſupport of Government, and was in ſome degree ſucceſsful. Diſtruſting his perſonal ſafety on ſhore, about the middle of September he took up his reſidence on board an armed veſſel in the harbour.

The royal government ſtill exiſted in name and form; but the real power which the people obeyed, was exerciſed by a Provincial Congreſs, a Council of Safety, and ſubordinate commitees. To conciliate the friendſhip of the Indians, the popular leaders ſent a ſmall ſupply of powder into the country. They who were oppoſed to Congreſs, embodied, and robbed the waggons which were employed in its tranſportation. To inflame the minds of their adherents, they propagated a report that the powder was intended to be given to the Indians for the purpoſe of maſſacreing the friends of royal government. The inhabitants took arms, ſome to ſupport royal government, but others to ſupport the American meaſures. The royaliſts acted

1776. acted feebly, and were easily overpowered. They were disheartened by the superior numbers that opposed them; they every where gave way, and were obliged either to fly or feign submission. Solicitations had been made about this time for royal forces to awe the southern provinces, but without effect, till the proper season was over. One scheme for this purpose was frustrated by a singular device. Private intelligence had been received of an express being sent from Sir James Wright, Governor of Georgia, to General Gage. By him the necessity of ordering a part of the royal army to the southward was fully stated. The express was waylaid, and compelled by two gentlemen to deliver his letters. One to General Gage was kept back, and another one forwarded in its room. The seal and hand writing were so exactly imitated that the deception was not suspected. The forged letter was received and acted upon; it stated such a degree of peace and tranquillity as induced an opinion that there was no necessity of sending royal troops to the southward. While these states were thus left to themselves, they had time and opportunity to prepare for extremities, and in the mean time the friends of royal government were severally crushed. A series of disasters followed the royal cause in the year 1775. General Gage's army was cooped up in Boston, and rendered useless. In the southern states, where a small force would have made an impression, the royal Governors were unsupported. Much was done to irritate the Colonists and to cement their union, but very little, either in the way of conquest or concession, to subdue their spirits or conciliate their affections.

In this year the people of America generally took their side. Every art was made use of by the popular leaders to attach the inhabitants to their royal cause; nor were the votaries of the royal interest inactive. But little impression was made by the latter, except among the uninformed. The great mass of the wealth, learning, and influence, in all the southern Colonies, and in most of the northern, was in favour of the American cause. Some aged persons were exceptions to the contrary. Attached to ancient habits, and enjoying the fruits of their industry, they

they were flow in approving new meafures fubverfive of the former, and endangering the latter. A few who had bafked in the funfhine of court favour, were reftrained by honour, principle, and intereft, from forfaking the fountain of their enjoyments. Some feared the power of Britain, and others doubted the perfeverance of America; but a great majority refolved to hazard every thing in preference to a tame fubmiffion. In the beginning of the year, the Colonifts were farmers, merchants, and mechanics; but in its clofe they had affumed the profeffion of foldiers. So fudden a transformation of fo numerous and fo difperfed a people is without a parallel. 1776.

This year was alfo remarkable for the general termination of royal government: this was effected without any violence to its executive officers. The new fyftem was not fo much forcibly impofed or defignedly adopted, as introduced through neceffity, and the imperceptible agency of a common danger, operating uniformly on the mind of the public. The royal governors, for the moft part, voluntarily abdicated their government, and retired on board fhips of war. They affigned for reafon, that they apprehended perfonal danger, but this, in every inftance, was unfounded. Perhaps thefe reprefentatives of royalty thought, that as they were conftitutionally neceffary to the adminiftration of juftice, the horrors of anarchy would deter the people from profecuting their oppofition. If they acted from this principle, they were miftaken. Their withdrawing from the exercife of their official duties, both furnifhed an apology, and induced a neceffity for organizing a fyftem of government independent of royal authority. By encouraging oppofition to the popular meafures, they involved their friends in great diftrefs. The unfuccefsful infurrections which they fomented, being improperly timed, and unfupported, were eafily overthrown, and actually ftrengthened the popular government which they meant to deftroy.

1776.

CHAP. X.

Transactions of Massachusetts, and Evacuation of Boston.

AS the year 1775 drew near to a close, the friends of Congress were embarrassed with a new difficulty. Their army was temporary, and only engaged to serve out the year. The object for which they had taken up arms was not yet obtained. Every reason which had previously induced the provinces to embody a military force, still existed, and with increasing weight. It was therefore resolved to form a new army. The same flattering hopes were indulged, that an army for the ensuing year would answer every purpose. A committee of Congress, consisting of Dr. Franklin, Mr. Lynch, and Mr. Harrison, repaired to head quarters at Cambridge, and there, in conjunction with General Washington, made arrangements for organizing an army for the year 1776. It was presumed that the spirit which had hitherto operated on the yeomanry of the country, would induce most of the same individuals to engage for another twelvemonth, but on experiment it was found that much of their military ardour had already evaporated. The first impulse of passion, and the novelty of the scene, had brought many to the field, who had great objections against continuing in the military line. They found, that to be soldiers, required sacrifices of which, when they assumed that character, they had no idea. So unacquainted were the bulk of the people with the mode of carrying on modern war, that many of them flew to arms with the delusive expectation of settling the whole dispute by a few decisive and immediate engagements. Experience soon taught them, that to risk life in open fighting was but a part of the soldier's duty. Several of the inferior officers retired—the men frequently refused to enlist, unless they were allowed to chuse their officers. Others would not engage unless they were indulged with furloughs. Fifty would apply together for leave of absence; indulgence threatened less ruinous consequences than a refusal would probably have produced. On the whole, enlistments went on slowly. Though the recruits

for the new army had not arrived, yet the Connecticut troops, whofe time expired on the firft of December, could not be perfuaded to continue in fervice. On their way home, feveral of them were ftopped by the country people and compelled to return. When every thing feemed to be expofed by the departure of fo great a part of the late army, the militia was called on for a temporary aid. A new difficulty obftructed as well the recruiting of the army, as the coming in of the militia. Sundry perfons infected with the fmall pox, were fent out of Bofton and landed at Point Shirley. Such was the dread of that difeafe, that the Britifh army fcarcely excited equal terror. So many difficulties retarded the recruiting fervice, that on the laft day of the year 1775, the whole American army amounted to no more than 9650 men. Of the remarkable events with which this important year was replete, it was not the leaft, that within mufket fhot of twenty Britifh regiments, one army was difbanded and another enlifted. 1776.

All this time the Britifh troops at Bofton were fuffering the inconvenience of a blockade. From the 19th of April they were cut off from thofe refrefhments which their fituation required; their fupplies from Britain did not reach the coaft for a long time after they were expected. Several were taken by the American cruifers, and others were loft at fea. This was in particular the fate of many of their coal fhips. The want of fuel was peculiarly felt in a climate where the winter is both fevere and tedious. They relieved themfelves in part from their fufferings on this account, by the timber of houfes which they pulled down and burnt. Veffels were difpatched to the Weft Indies to procure provifions; but the iflands were fo ftraitened that they could afford but little affiftance. Armed fhips and tranfports were ordered to Georgia with an intent to procure rice, but the people of that province, with the aid of a party from South-Carolina, fo effectually oppofed them, that of eleven veffels, only two got off fafe with their cargoes. It was not till the ftock of the garrifon was nearly exhaufted, that the tranfports from England entered the port of Bofton, and relieved the diftreffes of the garrifon.

While

1776. While the troops within the lines were apprehensive of suffering from want of provisions, the troops without were equally uneasy for want of employment. Used to labour and motion on their farms, they but illy relished the inactivity and confinement of a camp life. Fiery spirits declaimed in favour of an assault. They preferred a bold spirit of enterprize to that passive fortitude which bears up under present evils, while it waits for favourable junctures. To be in readiness for an
January attempt of this kind, a council of war recommended to
17—18. call in 7280 militia men, from New-Hampshire or Connecticut. This number added to the regular army before Boston, would have made an operating force of about 17,000 men.

The provincials laboured under great inconveniencies from the want of arms and ammunition. Very early in the contest, the King of Great Britain, by proclamation, forbad the exportation of warlike stores to the Colonies. Great exertions had been made to manufacture salt petre and gunpowder, but the supply was slow and inadequate. A secret committee of Congress had been appointed, with ample powers to lay in a stock of this necessary article. Some swift sailing vessels had been dispatched to the coast of Africa, to purchase what could be procured in that distant region. A party from Charlestown forcibly took about 17,000lbs. of powder from a vessel near the bar of St. Augustine. Some time after, Commodore Hopkins stripped Providence, one of the Bahama islands, of a quantity of artillery and stores; but the whole procured from all these quarters was far short of a sufficiency. In order to supply the new army before Boston with the necessary means of defence, an application was made to Massachusetts for arms, but on examination it was found that their public stores afforded only 200. Orders were issued to purchase firelocks from private persons, but few had any to sell, and fewer would part with them. In the month of February, there were 2000 of the American infantry who were destitute of arms. Powder was equally scarce, and yet daily applications were made for the dividends of the small quantity which

which was on hand,* for the defence of various parts threatened with invasion. The eastern Colonies presented an unusual sight; a powerful enemy safely intrenched in their first city, while a fleet was ready to transport them to any part of the coast; a numerous body of husbandmen was resolutely bent on opposition, but without the necessary arms and ammunition for self-defence. The eyes of all were fixed on General Washington, and from him it was unreasonably expected that he would, by a bold exertion, free the town of Boston from the British troops. The dangerous situation of public affairs led him to conceal the real scarcity of arms and ammunition, and with that magnanimity which is characteristical of great minds, to suffer his character to be assailed, rather than vindicate himself by exposing his many wants. There were not wanting persons, who, judging from the superior numbers of men in the American army, boldly asserted, that if the commander in chief was not desirous of prolonging his importance at the head of an army, he might, by a vigorous exertion, gain possession of Boston. Such suggestions were reported and believed by several, while they were uncontradicted by the General, who chose to risk his fame, rather than expose his army and his country. 1776.

Agreeably to the request of the council of war, about 7000 of the militia had rendezvoused in February. General Washington stated to his officers that the troops in camp, together with the re-inforcements which had been called for, and were daily coming in, would amount nearly to 17,000 men—that he had not powder sufficient for a bombardment, and asked their advice whether, as reinforcements might be daily expected to the enemy, it would not be prudent before that event took place, to make an assault on the British lines. The proposition was negatived;* but it was recommended to take possession of Dorchester Heights. To conceal this design, and to divert the attention of the garrison, a bombardment of the town from other directions commenced, and was carried on for three days with as much briskness as a deficient stock of powder would admit. In this first essay, three

1776. three of the mortars were broken, either from a defect in their construction, or more probably from ignorance of the proper mode of using them.

The night of the 4th of March was fixed upon for taking possession of Dorchester Heights. A covering party of about 800 men led the way; these were followed by the carts with the intrenching tools, and 1200 of a working party, commanded by General Thomas. In the rear there were more than 200 carts, loaded with fascines, and hay in bundles. While the cannon were playing in other parts, the greatest silence was kept by this working party. The active zeal of the industrious provincials completed lines of defence by the morning, which astonished the garrison. The difference between Dorchester Heights on the evening of the 4th, and the morning of the 5th, seemed to realise the tales of romance. The Admiral informed General Howe, that if the Americans kept possession of these heights, he would not be able to keep one of his Majesty's ships in the harbour. It was therefore determined in a council of war, to attempt to dislodge them. An engagement was hourly expected. It was intended by General Washington, in that case, to force his way into Boston with 4000 men, who were to have embarked at the mouth of Cambridge river. The militia had come forward with great alertness; each bringing three days provision, in expectation of an immediate assault. The men were in high spirits, and impatiently waiting for the appeal.

They were reminded that it was the 5th of March, and were called upon to avenge the death of their countrymen killed on that day. The many eminences in and near Boston, which overlooked the ground on which it was expected that the contending parties would engage, were crowded with numerous spectators. But General Howe did not intend to attack till the next day. In order to be ready for it, the transports went down in the evening towards the castle. In the night a most violent storm, and towards morning a heavy flood of rain came on. A carnage was thus providentially prevented, that would probably have equalled, if not exceeded the fatal

one

one on 17th of June at Bunker's Hill. In this ſituation it was agreed by the Britiſh in a council of war, to evacuate the town as ſoon as poſſible. 1776.

In a few days after, a flag came out of Boſton with a paper ſigned by four ſelect men, informing, "that they had applied to General Robertſon, who, on an application to General Howe, was authoriſed to aſſure them that he had no intention of burning the town, unleſs the troops under his command were moleſted during their embarkation, or at their departure, by the armed force without." When this paper was preſented to General Waſhington, he replied, "that as it was an unauthenticated paper, and without an addreſs, and not obligatory on General Howe, he could take no notice of it;" but at the ſame time intimated his good wiſhes for the ſecurity of the town.

A proclamation was iſſued by General Howe, ordering all woollen and linen goods to be delivered to Crean Bruſh, Eſq. Shops were opened and ſtripped of their goods. A licentious plundering took place; much was carried off, and more was wantonly deſtroyed. Theſe irregularities were forbidden in orders, and the guilty threatened with death, but, nevertheleſs, every miſchief which diſappointed malice could ſuggeſt was committed.

The Britiſh, amounting to more than 7000 men, evacuated Boſton, leaving their barracks ſtanding, and alſo a number of pieces of cannon ſpiked, four large iron ſea mortars, and ſtores to the value of 30,000l. They demoliſhed the caſtle, and knocked off the trunnions of the cannon. Various incidents cauſed a delay of nine days after the evacuation, before they left Nantaſket road. March 17.

This embarkation was attended with many circumſtances of diſtreſs and embarraſſment. On the departure of the royal army from Boſton, a great number of the inhabitants attached to their ſovereign, and afraid of public reſentment, choſe to abandon their country. From the great multitude about to depart, there was no poſſibility of procuring purchaſers for their furniture, neither was there a ſufficiency of veſſels for its convenient tranſportation. Mutual jealouſy ſubſiſted between the army

1776. army and navy; each charging the other as the cauſe of ſome part of their common diſtreſs. The army was full of diſcontent. Reinforcements, though long promiſed, had not arrived: both officers and ſoldiers thought themſelves neglected. Five months had elapſed ſince they had received any advice of their deſtination. Wants and inconveniences increaſed their ill humour. Their intended voyage to Halifax ſubjected them to great dangers. The coaſt at all times hazardous, was eminently ſo at that tempeſtuous equinoctial ſeaſon. They had reaſon to fear they would be blown off to the Weſt-Indies, and without a ſufficient ſtock of proviſions. They were alſo going to a barren country. To add to their difficulties, this dangerous voyage when completed, was directly ſo much out of their way. Their buſineſs lay to the ſouthward, and they were going northward. Under all theſe difficulties, and with all theſe gloomy proſpects, the fleet ſteered for Halifax. Contrary to appearances, the voyage thither was both ſhort and proſperous. They remained there for ſome time, waiting for reinforcements and inſtructions from England. When the royal fleet and army departed from Boſton, ſeveral ſhips were left behind for the protection of veſſels coming from England; but the American privateers were ſo alert, that they, nevertheleſs, made many prizes. Some of the veſſels which they captured, were laden with arms and warlike ſtores. Some tranſports with troops on board, were alſo taken. Theſe had run into the harbour, not knowing that the place was evacuated. The boats employed in the embarkation of the Britiſh troops, had ſcarcely completed their buſineſs, when General Waſhington with his army marched into Boſton. He was received with marks of approbation more flattering than the pomps of a triumph. The inhabitants, releaſed from the ſeverities of a garriſon life, and from the various indignities to which they were ſubjected, hailed him as their deliverer. Reciprocal congratulations between thoſe who had been confined within the Britiſh lines and thoſe who were excluded from entering them, were exchanged with an ardour which cannot be deſcribed. General Waſhington

Washington was honoured by Congress with a vote of thanks; they also ordered a medal to be struck, with suitable devices, to perpetuate the remembrance of the great event. The Massachusetts council and house of representatives complimented him in a joint address, in which they expressed their good wishes in the following words, "May you still go on approved by Heaven—revered by all good men, and dreaded by those tyrants, who claim their fellow men as their property." His answer was modest and proper. 1776.

The evacuation of Boston had been previously determined upon by the British Ministry, from principles of political expedience. Being resolved to carry on the war for purposes affecting all the Colonies, they conceived a central position to be preferable to Boston. Reasoning of this kind had induced the adoption of the measure, but the American works on Roxbury expedited its execution. The abandonment of their friends, and the withdrawing their forces from Boston, was the first act of a tragedy in which evacuations and retreats were the scenes which most frequently occurred, and the epilogue of which was a total evacuation of the United States.

CHAP. XI.

Transactions in Canada.

THE tide of good fortune, which in the autumn of 1775 flowed in upon General Montgomery, induced Congress to reinforce the army under his command. Chamblee, St. John's, and Montreal, having surrendered to the Americans, a fair prospect opened of expelling the British from Canada, and of annexing that province to the United Colonies. While they were in imagination anticipating these events, the army in which they confided was defeated, and the general whom they adored was killed. The intelligence transmitted from General Montgomery previous to his assault on Quebec, encouraged Jan. 8, Congress to resolve that nine battalions should be kept 1776. up and maintained in Canada. The repulse of their army,

1776. army, though discouraging, did not extinguish the ardour of the Americans. It was no sooner known at head quarters in Cambridge, than General Washington convened a council of war, by which it was resolved, "That as no troops could be spared from Cambridge, the Colonies of Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New-Hampshire, should be requested to raise three regiments and forward

Jan. 19. them to Canada. Congress also resolved to forward the re-inforcements previously voted, and to raise four battalions in New York, for the defence of that Colony, and to garrison Crown-Point, and the several posts to the southward of that fortress. That the army might be supplied with blankets for this winter expedition, a committee was appointed to procure from householders such as could be spared from their families. To obtain a supply of hard money for the use of the army in Canada, proper persons were employed to exchange paper money for specie. Such was the enthusiasm of the times that many thousand Mexican dollars were freely exchanged at par, by individuals, for the paper bills of Congress. It was also resolved to raise a corps of artillery for this service, and to take into the pay of the Colonies one thousand Canadians in addition to Colonel Livingston's regiment; Moses Hazen, a native of Massachusetts, who had resided many years in Canada, was appointed to the command of this new corps.

Jan. 24. Congress addressed a letter to the Canadians, in which they observed, "Such is the lot of human nature, that the best of causes are subject to vicissitudes; but generous souls, enlightened and warmed with the fire of liberty, become more resolute as difficulties increase." They stated to them, "that eight battalions were raising to proceed to their province, and that if more force was necessary it should be sent." They requested them to seize with eagerness the favourable opportunity then offered to co-operate in the present glorious enterprise, and they advised them to establish associations in their different parishes,—to elect deputies for forming a provincial assembly, and for representing them in Congress.

The cause of the Americans had received such powerful aid from many patriotic publications in their Gazettes, and

and from the fervent exhortations of popular preachers, connecting the cause of liberty with the animating principles of religion, that it was determined to employ these two powerful instruments of revolutions, printing and preaching, to operate on the minds of the Canadians. A complete apparatus for printing, together with a printer and a clergyman, were therefore sent into Canada. 1776.

Congress also appointed Dr. Franklin, Mr. Chase, and Mr. Carrol, the two first of whom were members of their body, and the last a respectable gentleman of the Roman Catholic persuasion, to proceed to Canada with the view of gaining over the people of that Colony to the cause of America, and authorised them to promise on behalf of the United Colonies, that Canada should be received into their association on equal terms, and also that the inhabitants thereof should enjoy the free exercise of their religion, and the peaceable possession of all their ecclesiastical property.

The desire of effecting something decisive in Canada before the approaching spring would permit relief to ascend the river St. Lawrence, added to the enthusiasm of the day, led the Americans to encounter difficulties which, in less animated times, would be reckoned insurmountable. Arthur St. Clair, who was appointed colonel of one of the Pennsylvania regiments, received his recruiting orders on the 10th of January, and notwithstanding the shortness of the period, his regiment was not only raised, but six companies of it had, in this extreme cold season, completed their march from Pennsylvania to Canada, a distance of several hundred miles, and on the 11th of April following joined the American army before Quebec.

Though Congress and the states made great exertions to support the war in Canada, yet from the fall of Montgomery their interest in that Colony daily declined. The reduction of Quebec was an object to which their resources were inadequate. Their unsuccessful assault on Quebec made an impression both on the Canadians and Indians unfavourable to their views. A woman infected with the small-pox had either been sent out, or voluntarily came out of Quebec, and by mixing with the American soldiers propa-

1776. propagated that ſcourge of the new world to the great diminution of the effective force of their army. The ſoldiers inoculated themſelves, though their officers iſſued poſitive orders to the contrary. By the firſt of May ſo many new troops had arrived, that the American army, in name, amounted to 3000, but from the prevalence of the ſmall-pox there was only 900 fit for duty. The increaſing number of invalids retarded their military operations, and diſcouraged their friends, while the oppoſite party was buoyed up with the expectation that the advancing ſeaſon would ſoon bring them relief. To theſe cauſes of the declining intereſt of Congreſs, it muſt be added that the affections of the Canadians were alienated. They had many and well-founded complaints againſt the American ſoldiers. Unreſtrained by the terror of civil law and refuſing obedience to a military code, the hope of impunity and the love of plunder, led many of the invading army to practices not leſs diſgraceful to themſelves, than injurious to the cauſe in which they had taken arms. Not only the common ſoldiers, but the officers of the American army, deviated in their intercourſe with the Canadians, from the maxims of ſound policy. Several of them having been lately taken from obſcure life were giddy with their exaltation. Far from home they were unawed by thoſe checks which commonly reſtrain the ferocity of man.

The reduction of Chamblee, St. John's, and Montreal, together with the expoſed ſituation of Quebec, being known in England, meaſures were without delay adopted by the Britiſh miniſtry to introduce into Canada as ſoon as poſſible, a force ſufficient for the double purpoſe of recovering what they had loſt, and of proſecuting offenſive operations from that quarter againſt the revolted Colonies. The van of this force made good its paſſage

May 5. very early in the ſpring through the ice up the river St. Lawrence. The expectation of their coming had for ſome time damped the hopes of the beſiegers, and had induced them to think of a retreat. The day before the firſt of the Britiſh re-inforcements arrived, that meaſure was reſolved upon by a council of war, and arrangements were made for carrying it into execution.

Governor

Governor Carleton was too great a proficient in the art of war, to delay seizing the advantages which the consternation of the besiegers, and the arrival of a re-inforcement, afforded. A small detachment of soldiers and marines from the ships which had just ascended the river St. Lawrence, being landed and joined to the garrison in Quebec, he marched out at their head to attack the Americans. On his approach, he found every thing in confusion; the late besiegers abandoning their artillery and military stores, had in great precipitation retreated. In this manner at the expiration of five months, the mixed siege and blockade of Quebec was raised. The fortitude and perseverance of the garrison reflected honour on both officers and privates. 1776.

The reputation acquired by General Carleton in his military character, for bravely and judiciously defending the province committed to his care, was exceeded by the superior applause, merited from his exercise of the virtues of humanity and generosity. Among the numerous sick in the American hospitals, several incapable of being moved were left behind. The victorious General proved himself worthy of success by his treatment of these unfortunate men; he not only fed and cloathed them, but permitted them when recovered to return home. Apprehending that fear might make some conceal themselves in the woods, rather than by applying for relief, make themselves known, he removed their doubts by a proclamation, in which he engaged, "that as soon as their health was May 10. restored, they should have free liberty of returning to their respective provinces." This humane line of conduct was more injurious to the views of the leaders in the American Councils, than the severity practised by other British commanders. The truly politic, as well as humane General Carleton, dismissed these prisoners, after liberally supplying their wants, with a recommendation, "to go home, mind their farms, and keep themselves and their neighbours from all participation in the unhappy war."

The small force which arrived at Quebec early in May, was followed by several British regiments; together with the

1776. the Brunſwick troops, in ſuch a rapid ſucceſſion, that in a few weeks the whole was eſtimated at 13,000 men.

The Americans retreated forty-five miles before they ſtopped. After a ſhort halt, they proceeded to the Sorel, at which place they threw up ſome ſlight works for their ſafety. They were there joined by ſome battalions coming to re-inforce them. About this time General Thomas, the commander in chief in Canada, was ſeized with the ſmall pox and died, having forbidden his men to inoculate, he conformed to his own rule, and refuſed to avail himſelf of that precaution. On his death, the command devolved at firſt on General Arnold, and afterwards on General Sullivan. It ſoon became evident, that the Americans muſt abandon the whole province of Canada.

From a deſire to do ſomething which might counterbalance in the minds of the Canadians, the unfavourable impreſſion which this farther retreat would communicate, General Thomſon projected an attack on the Britiſh poſt at the Three Rivers. This lies about half way between Quebec and Montreal, and is ſo called from the vicinity of one of the branches of a large river, whoſe waters are diſcharged through three mouths into the St. Lawrence. With this view a detachment of ſix hundred men was put under the command of Colonel St. Clair. At their head he advanced to the village of Nicolette. When every thing was ready for the enterpriſe, intelligence was received that ſix tranſports, eſcorted by two frigates from Quebec, had arrived and brought a large addition to the late force at the Three Rivers. This cauſed ſome new movements, and a delay till more troops could be brought forward. General Thomſon then came on with a re-inforcement and took the command of the whole. It was determined to make the propoſed attack in four different places at the ſame time. One diviſion commanded by Colonel Wayne was to gain the eaſtern extremity of the town. One commanded by Colonel Maxwell was to enter from the northward about the center, and the other two diviſions commanded by Colonels Sinclair and Irvine were to enter from the weſtward. The whole having

having embarked at midnight, landed at the Point du Lac, about three hours before day. At some distance from this point, there are two ways of approaching Three Rivers, one by a road that leads along the banks of the St. Lawrence, the other by a road almost parallel, but at a considerable distance. It had been determined to advance on the last. Intelligence was brought to General Thomson, soon after his landing, that a party of 3 or 400 men were posted at three miles distance. The troops were instantly put in motion to dislodge them. The intelligence proved to be false, but it had carried the detachment some distance beyond the point where the roads separated. To have returned, would have consumed time that could not be spared as the day was fast approaching. It was therefore resolved to proceed in a diagonal direction towards the road they had left. After being much retarded by very difficult grounds, they arrived at a morass which seemed impassable. Here the day broke, when they were six miles from their object. General Thomson suspecting the fidelity of his guides, put them under arrest—reversed the order of his march, and again reached the road by the river. He had advanced but a small distance before he was fired upon by two armed vessels. All expectation of succeeding by surprise was now at end; it was therefore instantly determined to make an open attack. The sun was rising; the drums were ordered to beat, and the troops moved on with the greatest alacrity. Having advanced three miles farther, the ships of war began to fire on them. The American officer who led the advance, struck into a road on the left, which also led to the town, and was covered from the fire of the ships. This last road was circuitous and led through a vast tract of woodland at that season almost impassable. He nevertheless entered the wood, and the rest of the detachment followed. After incredible labour, and wading a rivulet breast deep, they gained the open country north of the village. A party of the British were soon discovered about a mile to the left of the Americans, and between them and the town. Colonel Wayne, ardent for action, immediately attacked them. The onset was gallant and

1776. and vigorous, but the contest was unequal. The Americans were soon repulsed and forced to retreat. In the beginning of the action General Thomson left the main body of his corps to join that which was engaged. The woods were so thick, that it was difficult for any person in motion, after losing sight of an object to recover it. The General therefore never found his way back. The situation of Colonel St. Clair, the next in command, became embarrassing. In his opinion a retreat was necessary, but not knowing the precise situation of his superior officer, and every moment expecting his return, he declined giving orders for that purpose. At last, when the British were discovered on the river road, advancing in a direction to gain the rear of the Americans, Colonel St. Clair, in the absence of General Thomson, ordered a retreat. This was made by treading back their steps through the same dismal swamp by which they had advanced. The British marched directly for the Point du Lac with the expectation of securing the American batteaux. On their approach Major Wood, in whose care they had been left, retired with them to the Sorel. At the Point du Lac, the British halted and took a very advantageous position. As soon as it was discovered that the Americans had retired, a party of the British pursued them. When the former arrived near the place of their embarkation, they found a large party of their enemies posted in their front, at the same time that another was only three quarters of a mile in their rear. Here was a new and trying dilemma, and but little time left for consideration. There was an immediate necessity, either to lay down their arms, or attempt by a sudden march to turn the party in front and get into the country beyond it. The last was thought practicable. Colonel St. Clair having some knowledge of the country from his having served in it in the preceding war, gave them a route by the Acadian village where the river de Loups is fordable. They had not advanced far when Colonel St. Clair found himself unable to proceed from a wound, occasioned by a root which had penetrated through his shoe. His men offered to carry him, but this generous proposal was de-

clined.

clined. He and two or three officers, who having been worn down with fatigue, remained behind with him, found an asylum under a cover of a large tree which had been blown up by the roots. They had not been long in this situation when they heard a firing from the British in almost all directions; they nevertheless lay still, and in the night stole off from the midst of surrounding foes.— They were now pressed with the importunate cravings of hunger, for they were entering on the third day without food. After wandering for some time they accidentally found some peasants who entertained them with great hospitality. In a few days they joined the army at Sorel, and had the satisfaction to find that the greatest part of the detachment had arrived safe before them. In their way through the country, although they might in almost every step of it have been made prisoners, and had reason to fear that the inhabitants, from the prospect of reward, would have been tempted to take them, yet they met with neither injury nor insult. General Thomson was not so fortunate. After having lost the troops and falling in with Colonel Irwine, and some other officers, they wandered the whole night in thick swamps, without being able to find their way out. Failing in their attempts to gain the river, they had taken refuge in a house, and were there made prisoners. 1776.

The British forces having arrived, and a considerable body of them having rendezvoused at the Three Rivers, a serious pursuit of the American army commenced. Had Sir Guy Carleton taken no pains to cut off their retreat, and at once attacked their post, or rather their fortified camp at Sorel, it would probably have fallen into his hands; but either the bold, though unsuccessful attack at the Three Rivers had taught him to respect them, or he wished to reduce them without bloodshed. In the pursuit he made three divisions of his army, and arranged them so as to embrace the whole American encampment, and to command it in every part. The retreat was delayed so long that the Americans evacuated Sorel, only about two hours before one division of the British made its appearance.

1776. While the Americans were retreating, they were daily assailed by the remonstrances of the inhabitants of Canada, who had either joined or befriended them. Great numbers of Canadians had taken a decided part in their favour, rendered them essential services, and thereby incurred the heavy penalties annexed to the crime of supporting rebellion. These, though Congress had assured them but a few months before, "that they would never abandon them to the fury of their common enemies," were, from the necessity of the case, left exposed to the resentment of their provincial rulers. Several of them, with tears in their eyes, expostulated with the retreating army, and, bewailing their hard fate, prayed for support. The only relief the Americans could offer was an assurance of continued protection, if they retreated with them, but this was a hard alternative to men who had wives, children, and immoveable effects. They generally concluded, that it was the least of two evils to cast themselves on the mercy of that government against which they had offended.

The distresses of the retreating army were great. The British were close on their rear, and threatening them with destruction. The unfurnished state of the Colonies in point of ordnance imposed a necessity of preserving their cannon. The men were obliged to drag their loaded batteaus up the rapids by mere strength, and when they were to the middle in water. The retreating army was also incumbered with great numbers labouring under the small-pox and other diseases. Two regiments, at one time, had not a single man in health; another had only six, and a fourth only forty, and two more were in nearly the same condition.

To retreat in face of an enemy is at all times hazardous; but on this occasion it was attended with an unusual proportion of embarrassments. General Sullivan, who conducted the retreat, nevertheless acted with so much judgement and propriety, that the baggage and public stores were saved, and the numerous sick brought off. The American army reached Crown-Point on the 1st of July, and at that place made their first stand.

A short

A ſhort time before the Americans evacuated the province of Canada, General Arnold convened the merchants of Montreal, and propoſed to them to furniſh a quantity of ſpecified articles for the uſe of the army in the ſervice of Congreſs. While they were deliberating on the ſubject, he placed centinels at their ſhop doors, and made ſuch arrangements, that what was at firſt only a requeſt, operated as a command. A great quantity of goods were taken on pretence that they were wanted for the uſe of the American army, but in their number were many articles only ſerviceable to women, and to perſons in civil life. His nephew ſoon after opened a ſtore in Albany, and publicly diſpoſed of goods which had been procured at Montreal. 1776.

The poſſeſſion of Canada ſo eminently favoured the plans of defence adopted by Congreſs, that the province was evacuated with great reluctance. The Americans were not only mortified at the diſappointment of their favourite ſcheme, of annexing it as a fourteenth link in the chain of their confederacy, but apprehended the moſt ſerious conſequences from the aſcending of the Britiſh power in that quarter. Anxious to preſerve a footing there, they had perſevered for a long time in ſtemming the tide of unfavourable events.

General Gates was about this time appointed to command in Canada, but on coming to the knowledge of the late events in that province, he concluded to ſtop ſhort within the limits of New-York. The ſcene was henceforth reverſed. Inſtead of meditating the recommencement of offenſive operations, that army which had lately excited ſo much terror in Canada, was called upon to be prepared for repelling an invaſion threatened from that province. June 17.

The attention of the Americans being excluſively fixed on plans of defence, their general officers commanding in the northern department were convened to deliberate on the place and means moſt ſuitable for that purpoſe. To form a judgement on this ſubject, a recollection of the events of the late war between France and England was of advantage. The ſame ground was to be fought over, and

1776. and the same posts to be again contended for. On the confines of Lake George and Lake Champlain, two inland seas, which stretch almost from the sources of Hudson's river to the St. Lawrence, are situated the famous posts of Ticonderoga and Crown-Point. These are of primary necessity to any power which contends for the possession of the adjacent country, for they afford the most convenient stand either for its annoyance or defence. In the opinion of some American officers, Crown-Point, to which the army on the evacuation of Canada had retreated, was the most proper place for erecting works of defence, but it was otherwise determined by the council convened on this occasion. It was also by their advice resolved to move lower down, and to make the principal work on the strong ground east of Ticonderoga, and especially by every means to endeavour to maintain a naval superiority in Lake Champlain. In conformity to these resolutions General Gates, with about 12,000 men, which collected in the course of the summer, was fixed in command of Ticonderoga, and a fleet was constructed at Skenesborough. This was carried on with so much rapidity, that in a short time there were afloat in Lake
Aug. 22. Champlain, one sloop, three schooners, and six gondolas, carrying in the whole 58 guns, 86 swivels, and 440 men. Six other vessels were also nearly ready for launching at the same time. The fleet was put under the command of General Arnold, and he was instructed by General Gates to proceed beyond Crown-Point, down Lake Champlain, to the Split Rock; but most peremptorily restrained from advancing any farther, as security against an apprehended invasion was the ultimate end of the armament.

The expulsion of the American invaders from Canada was but a part of the British designs in that quarter. They urged the pursuit no farther than St. John's, but indulged the hope of being soon in a condition for passing the lakes, and penetrating through the country to Albany, so as to form a communication with New-York. The objects they had in view were great, and the obstacles in the way of their accomplishment equally so.

Before

Before they could advance with any proſpect of ſucceſs, a fleet ſuperior to that of the Americans on the lakes was to be conſtructed. The materials of ſome large veſſels were, for this purpoſe, brought from England, but their tranſportation, and the labour neceſſary to put them together, required both time and patience. The ſpirit of the Britiſh commanders roſe in proportion to the difficulties which were to be encountered. Nevertheleſs it was ſo late as the month of October before their fleet was prepared to face the American naval force on Lake Champlain. The former conſiſted of the ſhip Inflexible, mounting 18 twelve pounders, which was ſo expeditiouſly conſtructed, that ſhe ſailed from St. John's 28 days after laying her keel. One ſchooner mounting 14, and another 12 ſix-pounders; a flat-bottomed radeau carrying ſix 24 and ſix 12-pounders, beſides howitzers, and a gondola with ſeven nine-pounders. There were alſo twenty ſmaller veſſels with braſs field pieces, from 9 to 24-pounders, or with howitzers. Some long boats were furniſhed in the ſame manner. An equal number of large boats acted as tenders. Beſides theſe veſſels of war, there was a vaſt number deſtined for the tranſportation of the army, its ſtores, artillery, baggage, and proviſions. The whole was put under the command of Captain Pringle. The naval force of the Americans, from the deficiency of means, was far ſhort of what was brought againſt them. Their principal armed veſſel was a ſchooner, which mounted only 12 ſix and four-pounders, and their whole fleet, in addition to this, conſiſted of only fifteen veſſels of inferior force. 1776.

No one ſtep could be taken towards accompliſhing the deſigns of the Britiſh, on the northern frontiers of New-York, till they had the command of Lake Champlain. With this view their fleet proceeded up the lake, and engaged the Americans. The wind was ſo unfavourable to the Britiſh, that their ſhip Inflexible, and ſome other veſſel of force, could not be brought to action. This leſſened the inequality between the contending fleets ſo much, that the principal damage ſuſtained by the Americans was the loſs of a ſchooner and gondola. At the approach Oct. 11.

1776. approach of night the action was discontinued. The vanquished took the advantage which the darkness afforded to make their escape. This was effected by General Arnold with great judgement and ability. By the next morning the whole fleet under his command was out of sight. The British pursued with all the sail they could croud. The wind having become more favourable, they overtook the Americans, and brought them to action

Oct. 13. near Crown-Point. A smart engagement ensued, and was well supported on both sides for about two hours. Some of the American vessels which were most a-head escaped to Ticonderoga. Two gallies and five gondolas remained and resisted an unequal force with a spirit approaching to desperation. One of the gallies struck and was taken. General Arnold, though he knew that to escape was impossible, and to resist unavailing, yet, instead of surrendering, determined that his people should not become prisoners, nor his vessels a re-inforcement to the British. This spirited resolution was executed with a judgement equal to the boldness with which it had been adopted. He ran the Congress galley, on board of which he was, together with the five gondolas, on shore, in such a position as enabled him to land his men and blow up the vessels. In the execution of this perilous enterprize he paid a romantic attention to a point of honour. He did not quit his own galley till she was in flames, lest the British should board her and strike his flag. The result of this action, though unfavourable to the Americans, raised the reputation of General Arnold higher than ever; in addition to the fame of a brave soldier he acquired that of an able sea officer.

The American naval force being nearly destroyed, the British had undisputed possession of Lake Champlain. On this event a few continental troops, which had been at Crown-Point, retired to their main body at Ticonderoga. General Carleton took possession of the ground from which they had retreated, and was there soon joined by his army. He sent out several reconnoitring parties, and at one time pushed forward a strong detachment on both sides of the lake, which approached near

to

to Ticonderoga. Some British veſſels appeared at the same time, within cannon ſhot of the American works at that place. It is probable he had it in contemplation, if circumſtances favoured, to reduce the poſt, and that the apparent ſtrength of the works reſtrained him from making the attempt, and induced his return to Canada. 1776.

Such was the termination of the northern campaign in 1776. Though after the ſurrender of Montreal evacuations, defeats, and retreats, had almoſt uninterruptedly been the portion of the Americans, yet with reſpect to the great object of defence on the one ſide, and of conqueſt on the other, a whole campaign was gained to them, and loſt to their adverſaries.

The Britiſh had cleared Canada of its invaders, and deſtroyed the American fleet on the lakes, yet from impediments thrown in their way they failed in their ulterior deſigns. The delays contrived by General Gates retarded the Britiſh for ſo great a part of the ſummer, that by the time they had reached Ticonderoga, their retreat on account of the approaching winter became immediately neceſſary. On the part of the Americans, ſome men and a few armed veſſels were loſt, but time was gained, their army ſaved, and the frontier of the adjacent ſtates ſecured from a projected invaſion. On the part of the Britiſh, the object of a campaign, in which 13,000 men were employed, and near a million of money expended, was rendered in a great meaſure abortive.

CHAP. XII.

The Proceedings of Parliament againſt the Colonies, 1775—6. Operations in South-Carolina, New-York, and New-Jerſey.

THE operations carried on againſt the United Colonies in the year 1775, were adapted to caſes of criminal combination among ſubjects not in arms. The military arrangements for that year were therefore made on the idea of a trifling addition to a peace eſtabliſhment. It

1775. It was either not known, that a majority of the Americans had determined to reſiſt the power of Great Britain, rather than ſubmit to the late coercive laws, or it was not believed that they had ſpirit ſufficient to act in conformity to that determination. The propenſity in human nature to believe that to be true which is wiſhed to be ſo, had deceived the royal ſervants in America, and the Britiſh Miniſtry in England, ſo far as to induce their general belief, that a determined ſpirit on the part of government, and a few thouſand troops to ſupport that determination, would eaſily compoſe the troubles in America. Their military operations in the year 1775 were therefore calculated on the ſmall ſcale of ſtrengthening the civil power, and not on the large one of reſiſting an organized army. Though it had been declared by Parliament in February, 1775, that a rebellion exiſted in Maſſachuſetts, yet it was not believed that the Coloniſts would dare to abet their oppoſition by an armed force. The reſiſtance made by the militia at Lexington, the conſequent military arrangements adopted, firſt by Maſſachuſetts, and afterwards by Congreſs, together with the defence of Bunker's Hill, all conſpired to prove that the Americans were far from being contemptible adverſaries. The nation finding itſelf, by a fatal progreſſion of the unhappy diſpute, involved in a civil war, was rouſed to recollection. Though ſeveral corporate bodies, and ſundry diſtinguiſhed individuals in Great Britain, were oppoſed to coercive meaſures, yet there was a majority for proceeding. The pride of the nation was intereſted in humbling the Coloniſts, who had dared to reſiſt the power which had lately triumphed over the combined force of France and Spain. The proſpect of freeing their own eſtates from a part of the heavy taxes charged thereon, induced numbers of the landed gentlemen in Great Britain to ſupport the ſame meaſures; they conceived the coercion of the Colonies to be the moſt direct mode of ſecuring their contribution towards ſinking the national debt. Influenced by theſe opinions, ſuch not only juſtified the adoption of rigorous meaſures, but cheerfully conſented to preſent additional taxes with the ſame ſpirit which

which induces litigants in private life to advance money for forwarding a lawsuit, from the termination of which great profits are expected. Lord North, the Prime Minister of England, finding himself supported by so many powerful interests, was encouraged to proceed. He had already subdued a powerful party in the city of London, and triumphed over the East India Company. The submission of the Colonies was only wanting to complete the glory of his administration. Previous success emboldened him to attempt the arduous business. He flattered himself that the accomplishment of it would not only restore peace to the empire, but give a brilliancy to his name, far exceeding that of any of his predecessors. 1775.

Such was the temper of a great part of the nation, and such the ambitious views of its Prime Minister, when the Parliament was convened, on the 24th of October 1775. In the speech from the throne great complaints were made of the leaders in the Colonies, who were said by their misrepresentatives to have infused into the minds of the deluded multitude, opinions repugnant to their constitutional subordination, and afterwards to have proceeded to the commencement of hostilities, and the usurpation of the whole powers of government. His Majesty also charged his subjects in America with "meaning only to amuse, by vague expressions of attachment to the Parent State, while they were preparing for a general revolt:" and he farther asserted, "that the rebellious war now levied by them was become more general, and manifestly carried on for the purpose of establishing an independent empire, and that it was become the part of wisdom, and in its effects, of clemency, to put a speedy end to these disorders, by the most decisive exertions."

Information was also given, that "the most friendly offers of foreign assistance had been received, and that his Majesty's electoral troops were sent to the garrison of Gibraltar and Port Mahon, in order that a large number of the established forces of the kingdom might be applied to the maintenance of its authority." The severity of these assertions was mitigated by a declaration, "that when the unhappy and deluded multitude against whom

1775. whom this force ſhould be directed, would become ſenſible of their error, his Majeſty would be "ready to receive the miſled with tenderneſs and mercy; and that to prevent inconveniencies, he ſhould give authority to certain perſons on the ſpot, to grant general or particular pardons and indemnities to ſuch as ſhould be diſpoſed to return to their allegiance." The ſentiments expreſſed in this ſpeech, and the heavy charges therein laid againſt the Coloniſts, were re-echoed in addreſſes to the King from both Houſes of Parliament, but not without a ſpirited proteſt in the Houſe of Lords. In this, nineteen diſſenting members aſſerted the American war to be "unjuſt and impolitic in its principles, and fatal in its conſequences." They alſo declared, that they could not be content to an addreſs, "which might deceive his Majeſty and the public into a belief of the confidence of their Houſe in the preſent Miniſters, who had diſgraced Parliament, deceived the nation, loſt the Colonies, and involved them in a civil war againſt their cleareſt intereſts, and upon the moſt unjuſtifiable grounds wantonly ſpilling the blood of thouſands of their fellow ſubjects.

The ſanction of Parliament being obtained for a vigorous proſecution of the American war, eſtimates for the public ſervice were agreed to on the idea of operating againſt the Colonies as an hoſtile armed foreign power. To this end it was voted to employ 28,000 ſeamen, and 55,000 land forces, and the ſanction of authority was not long after given to meaſures for engaging foreign mercenaries. No Miniſtry had in any preceding war exerted themſelves more to proſecute military operations againſt alien enemies, than the preſent to make the enſuing campaign deciſive of the diſpute between the Mother Country and the Colonies. One legiſlative act was ſtill wanting to give full efficacy to the intended proſecution

Nov. 20, 1775. of hoſtilities. This was brought into Parliament in a bill interdicting all trade and intercourſe with the thirteen united Colonies. By it all property of Americans, whether of ſhips or goods on the high ſeas, or in harbour, was declared "to be forfeited to the captors, being the officers and crews of his Majeſty's ſhips of war." It farther enacted,

1775.

acted, "that the masters, crews, and other persons found on board captured American vessels, should be entered on board his Majesty's vessels of war, and there considered to be in his Majesty's service to all intents and purposes, as if they had entered of their own accord." This bill also authorised the Crown to appoint commissioners, who, over and above granting pardons to individuals, were empowered to "inquire into general and particular grievances, and to determine whether any Colony, or part of a Colony, was returned to that state of obedience which might entitle it to be received within the King's peace and protection." In that case, upon a declaration from the commissioners, "the restrictions of the proposed law were to cease."

It was said in favour of this bill, "that as the Americans were already in a state of war, it became necessary that hostilities should be carried on against them, as was usual against alien enemies. That the more vigorously and extensively military operations were prosecuted, the sooner would peace and order be restored. That as the commissioners went out with the sword in one hand, and terms of conciliation in the other, it was in the power of the Colonists to prevent the infliction of any real or apparent severities in the proposed statute."

In opposition to it, it was said, "that treating the Americans as a foreign nation, was chalking out the way for their independence." One member observed, that as the indiscriminate rapine of property, authorised by the bill, would oblige the Colonists to coalesce as one man, its title ought to be, "A bill for carrying more effectually into execution the resolves of Congress." The clause for vesting the property of the seizures in the captors, was reprobated as tending to extinguish in the breasts of seamen the principles of patriotism, of national pride and glory, and to substitute in their room habits of cruelty, of piracy and robbery. But of all parts of this bill, none was so severely condemned as that clause by which persons taken on board the American vessels, were indiscriminately compelled to serve as common sailors in British ships of war. This was said to be "a refinement of

tyranny

1775. tyranny worſe than death." It was alſo ſaid, "That no man could be deſpoiled of his goods as a foreign enemy, and at the ſame time obliged to ſerve as a citizen, and that compelling captives to bear arms againſt their families, kindred, friends, and country—and after being plundered themſelves, to become accomplices in plundering their brethren, was unexampled, except among pirates, the outlaws and enemies of human ſociety." To all theſe high charges the Miniſtry replied, "that the meaſure was an act of grace and favour, for," ſaid they, "the crews of American veſſels, inſtead of being put to death, the legal puniſhment of their demerits, as traitors and rebels, are by this law to be rated on the King's books, and treated as if they were on the ſame footing with a great body of his moſt uſeful and faithful ſubjects." It was alſo ſaid, "that their pay and emoluments in the ſervice of their lawful ſovereign would be a compenſation for all ſcruples that might ariſe from the ſuppoſed violation of their principles."

In the progreſs of the debates on this bill, Lord Manſfield declared, "that the queſtions of original right and wrong were no longer to be conſidered—that they were engaged in a war, and muſt uſe their utmoſt efforts to obtain the ends propoſed by it, that they muſt either fight or be purſued, and that the juſtice of the cauſe muſt give way to their preſent ſituation." Perhaps no ſpeech in or out of Parliament operated more extenſively on the irritated minds of the Coloniſts than this one.

The great abilities and profound legal knowledge of Lord Mansfield, were both known and admired in America. That this illuſtrious oracle of law ſhould declare from the ſeat of legiſlation, that the juſtice of the cauſe was no longer to be regarded, excited the aſtoniſhment, and cemented the union of the Coloniſts. "Great Britain," ſaid they, "has commenced war againſt us for maintaining our conſtitutional liberties, and her lawgivers now declare, they muſt proceed without any retroſpect to the merits of the original ground of diſpute. Our peace and happineſs muſt be ſacrificed to Britiſh honour and conſiſtency, in their continuing to proſecute an unjuſt

unjust invasion of our rights." A number of Lords, as usual, entered a limited protest against the bill, but it was carried by a great majority in both Houses of Parliament, and soon after received the royal assent. 1775. Dec. 21, 1775.

This law arrived in the Colonies in March 1776; the effects resulting from it were such as had been predicted by its opposers. It not only united the Colonies in resisting Great Britain, but produced a favourable opinion of independence in the minds of thousands, who previously reprobated that measure. It was considered from New-Hampshire to Georgia, as a legal discharge from allegiance to their native Sovereign. What was wanting to produce a decided majority of the party for breaking off all connection with Great Britain, was speedily obtained from the irritation excited by the hiring of foreign troops to fight against the Colonists. This measure was nearly coincident with the ratification of the prohibitory law just mentioned, and intelligence of both arrived in the Colonies about the same time.

The treaties which had been lately concluded with the Landgrave of Hesse Cassel, the Duke of Brunswick, and the Hereditary Prince of Hesse Cassel, for hiring their troops to the King of Great Britain, to be employed in the American service, being laid before the House of Commons, a motion was made thereon for referring them to the committee of supply. This occasioned a very interesting debate on the propriety of employing foreign troops against the Americans. The measure was supported on the necessity of prosecuting the war, and the impracticability of raising a sufficient number of domestic levies. It was also urged, "that foreign troops, inspired with the military maxims and ideas of implicit submission, would be less apt to be biassed by that false lenity which native soldiers might indulge, at the expence of national interest." It was said, "Are we to sit still and suffer an unprovoked rebellion to terminate in the formation of an independent hostile empire?" "Are we to suffer our Colonies, the object of the great national expence, and of two bloody wars, to be lost for ever to us, and given away to strangers from a scruple of employ- Feb. 29, 1776.

1776. employing foreign troops to preserve our just rights over Colonies for which we have paid so dear a purchase? As the Americans by refusing the obedience and taxes of subjects, deny themselves to be a part of the British empire, and make themselves foreigners, they cannot complain that foreigners are employed against them." On the other side, the measure was severely condemned; the necessity of the war was denied, and the nation was represented as disgraced by applying to the petty princes of Germany for succours against her own rebellious subjects. The tendency of the example to induce the Americans to form alliances with foreign powers, was strongly urged. It was said, "hitherto the Colonists have ventured to commit themselves singly in this arduous contest, without having recourse to foreign aid, but it is not to be doubted, that in future they will think themselves fully justified, both by our example and the laws of self-preservation, to engage foreigners to assist them in opposing those mercenaries, whom we are about to transport for their destruction. Nor is it doubtful that in case of their application, European powers of a rank far superior to that of those petty princes, to whom we have so abjectly sued for aid, will consider themselves to be equally entitled to interfere in the quarrel between us and our Colonies."

The supposition of the Americans receiving aid from France or Spain, was on this and several other occasions ridiculed, on the idea that these powers would not dare to set to their own Colonies the dangerous example of encouraging those of Great Britain, in opposing their sovereign. It was also supposed, that they would be influenced by considerations of future danger to their American possessions, from the establishment of an independent empire in their vicinty.

In this session of Parliament, between the 26th of October, 1775, and the 23d of May, 1776, the ultimate plan for reducing the Colonies was completely fixed. The Americans were declared out of the royal protection, and 16,000 foreign mercenaries, employed by national auth[illegible] to effect their subjugation. These measures

induced

induced Congress in the following summer to declare themselves independent, and to seek for foreign aid: events which shall be hereafter more fully explained. 1776.

Parliamentary sanction for carrying on the war against the Colonists, as against alien enemies, being obtained, it became necessary to fix on a commander of the royal forces to be employed on this occasion. This as a matter of right was, in the first instance, offered to General Oglethorpe, as being the first on the list of general officers. To the surprise of the Minister, that respectable veteran readily accepted the command, on condition of his being properly supported. A numerous well-appointed army, and a powerful fleet were promised him, to which he replied, "I will undertake the business without a man, or a ship of war, provided you will authorise me to assure the Colonies, on my arrival among them, that you will do them justice." He added farther, "I know the people of America well, and am satisfied, that his Majesty has not in any part of his dominions, more obedient, or more loyal subjects. You may secure their obedience by doing them justice, but you will never subdue them by force of arms." These opinions, so favourable to the Americans, proved General Oglethorpe to be an improper person for the purpose intended by the British Ministry. He was therefore passed over, and the command given to Sir William Howe.

It was resolved to open the campaign with such a powerful force as "would look down all opposition, and effectuate submission without bloodshed," and to direct its operations to the accomplishment of three objects. The first was the relief of Quebec, and the recovery of Canada, which also included a subsequent invasion of the north-western frontiers of the adjacent provinces. The second was a strong impression on some of the southern Colonies. The third and principal was, to take possession of New-York, with a force sufficiently powerful to keep possession of Hudson's River, and form a line of communication with the royal army in Canada, or to over-run the adjacent country.

The partial success of the first part of this plan has been in the preceding chapter explained. The execution of

1776. of the ſecond part was committed to General Clinton, and Sir Peter Parker; the former with a ſmall force having called at New-York, and alſo viſited in Virginia, Lord Dunmore, the late royal Governor of that Colony, and finding that nothing could be done at either place, proceeded to Cape Fear river. At that place he iſſued a proclamation from on board the Pallas tranſport, offering free pardon to all ſuch as ſhould lay down their arms, excepting Cornelius Haſnett, and Robert Howe, but the recent defeat of the regulators and Highlanders, reſtrained even their friends from paying any attention to this act of grace.

At Cape Fear a junction was formed between Sir Henry Clinton and Sir Peter Parker, the latter of whom had ſailed with his ſquadron directly from Europe. They concluded to attempt the reduction of Charleſtown, as being of all places within the line of their inſtructions, the object at which they could ſtrike with the greateſt proſpect of advantage. They had 2,800 land forces, which they hoped, with the co-operation of their ſhipping, would be fully ſufficient.

For ſome months paſt, every exertion had been made to put the colony of South-Carolina, and eſpecially its capital, Charleſtown, in a reſpectable poſture of defence. In ſubſerviency to this view, works had been erected on Sullivan's iſland, which is ſituated ſo near the channel leading up to the town, as to be a convenient poſt for annoying veſſels approaching it.

July 28. Sir Peter Parker attacked the fort on that iſland, with two fifty-gun ſhips, the Briſtol and Experiment, four frigates, the Active, Acteon, Solebay, and Syron, each of 28 guns. The Sphynx of 20 guns, the Friendſhip armed veſſel of 22 guns, Ranger ſloop, and Thunder bomb, each of 8 guns. On the fort were mounted 26 cannon, 26, 18, and 9-pounders. The attack commenced between ten and eleven in the forenoon, and was continued for upwards of ten hours. The garriſon conſiſting of 375 regulars and a few militia, under the command of Colonel Moultrie, made a moſt gallant defence. They fired deliberately, for the moſt part took aim

aim, and ſeldom miſſed their object. The ſhips were torn almoſt to pieces, and the killed and wounded on board exceeded 200 men. The loſs of the garriſon was only ten men killed, and 22 wounded. The fort being built of palmetto, was little damaged; the ſhot which ſtruck it were ineffectually buried in its ſoft wood. General Clinton had, ſome time before the engagement, landed with a number of troops on Long-Iſland, and it was expected that he ſhould have co-operated with Sir Peter Parker, by croſſing over the narrow paſſage which divides the two iſlands, and attacking the fort in its unfiniſhed rear; but the extreme danger to which he muſt unavoidably have expoſed his men, induced him to decline the perilous attempt. Colonel Thomſon with 7 or 800 men was ſtationed at the eaſt end of Sullivan's-Iſland, to oppoſe their croſſing. No ſerious attempt was made to land, either from the fleet, or the detachment commanded by Sir Henry Clinton. The firing ceaſed in the evening, and ſoon after the ſhips ſlipped their cables; before morning they had retired about two miles from the iſland. Within a few days more the troops re-embarked, and the whole ſailed from New-York. The thanks of Congreſs were given to General Lee, who had been ſent on by Congreſs to take the command in Carolina, and alſo to Colonels Moultrie and Thomſon, for their good conduct on this memorable day. In compliment to the commanding officer, the fort from that time was called Fort Moultrie. 1776.

During the engagement, the inhabitants ſtood with arms in their hands at their reſpective poſts, prepared to receive the enemy wherever they might land. Impreſſed with high ideas of Britiſh power and bravery, they were apprehenſive that the fort would be either ſilenced or paſſed, and that they ſhould be called to immediate action. They were cantoned in the various landing places near Charleſtown, and their reſolution was fixed to meet the invaders at the water's edge, and diſpute every inch of ground, truſting the event to Heaven.

By the repulſe of this armament, the ſouthern ſtates obtained a reſpite from the calamities of war for two years and a half. The defeat the Britiſh met with at Charleſ-

1776. town, ſeemed in ſome meaſure to counterbalance the unfavourable impreſſion made by their ſubſequent ſucceſſes to the northward. Throughout the whole ſummer, and till the cloſe of the year, Congreſs had little elſe than the victory on Sullivan's iſland, to conſole them under the various evacuations, retreats, and defeats, to which, as ſhall hereafter be related, their armies were obliged to ſubmit in every other part of the union. The event of the expedition contributed greatly to eſtabliſh the cauſe which it was intended to overſet. In oppoſition to the bold aſſertions of ſome, and the deſponding fears of others, experience proved that America might effectually reſiſt a Britiſh fleet and army. Thoſe who from intereſted motives had abetted the royal government, aſhamed of their oppoſition to the ſtruggles of an infant people for their deareſt rights, retired into obſcurity.

The effects of this victory, in animating the Americans, were much greater than could be warranted by the circumſtances of the action. As it was the firſt attack made by the Britiſh navy, its unſucceſsful iſſue inſpired a confidence which a more exact knowledge of military calculations would have corrected. The circumſtance of its happening in the early part of the war, and in one of the weaker provinces, were happily inſtrumental in diſpelling the gloom which overſhadowed the minds of many of the Coloniſts, on hearing of the powerful fleets and numerous armies which were coming againſt them.

The command of the force which was deſigned to operate againſt New-York, in this campaign, was given to Admiral Lord Howe, and his brother Sir William, officers who, as well from their perſonal characters, as the known bravery of their family, ſtood high in the confidence of the Britiſh nation. To this ſervice was allotted a very powerful army, conſiſting of about 30,000 men. This force was far ſuperior to any thing that America had heretofore ſeen. The troops were amply provided with artillery, military ſtores, and warlike materials of every kind, and were ſupported by a numerous fleet. The Admiral and General, in addition to their military powers, were appointed commiſſioners for reſtoring peace to the Colonies.

General

General Howe having in vain waited two months at Halifax for his brother, and the expected re-inforcements from England, impatient of farther delays, failed from that harbour, with the force which he had previously commanded in Boston, and directing his course towards New-York, arrived in the latter end of June, off Sandy Hook. Admiral Lord Howe, with part of the re-inforcement from England, arrived at Halifax soon after his brother's departure. Without dropping anchor he followed, and soon after joined him near Staten-Island. The British General, on his approach, found every part of New-York island, and the most exposed parts of Long-Island, fortified and well defended by artillery. About fifty British transports anchored near Staten-Island, which had not been so much the object of attention. The inhabitants thereof, either from fear, policy, or affection, expressed great joy on the arrival of the royal forces. General Howe was there met by Tryon, late governor of the province, and by several of the loyalists, who had taken refuge with him in an armed vessel. He was also joined by about sixty persons from New-Jersey, and 200 of the inhabitants of Staten-Island were embodied as a royal militia. From these appearances, great hopes were indulged that as soon as the army was in a condition to penetrate into the country, and protect the loyalists, such numbers would flock to their standard as would facilitate the attainment of the objects of the campaign.

1776. June 10. June 12.

On the fourth day after the British transports appeared off Sandy Hook, Congress, though fully informed of the numbers and appointment of the force about to be employed against the Colonies, ratified their famous declaration of independence. This was publicly read to the American army, and received by them with unfeigned acclamations of joy. Though it was well known that Great Britain had employed a force of 55,000 men, to war upon the new-formed states, and that the continental army was not near equal to half that number, and only engaged for a few months, and that Congress was without any assurance of foreign aid, yet both the American officers

1776. officers and privates gave every evidence of their hearty approbation of the decree which severed the Colonies from Great Britain, and submitted to the decision of the sword, whether they should be free states or conquered provinces. Now, said they, "we know the ground on which we stand; now we are a nation; no more shall the opprobrious term of rebel, with any appearance of justice, be applied to us. Should the fortune of war throw us into the hands of our enemies, we may expect the treatment of prisoners, and not the punishment of rebels. The prize for which we contend is of such magnitude that we may freely risk our lives to obtain it."

It had early occurred to General Washington, that the possession of New-York would be with the British a favourite object. Its central situation and contiguity to the ocean enabled them to carry with facility the war to any part of the sea coast. The possession of it was rendered still more valuable by the ease with which it could be maintained. Surrounded on all sides by water, it was defensible by a small number of British ships, against adversaries whose whole navy consisted only of a few frigates. Hudson's river being navigable for ships of the largest size to a great distance, afforded an opportunity of severing the eastern from the more southern states, and of preventing almost any communication between them.

From these well known advantages, it was presumed by the Americans, that the British would make great exertions to effect the reduction of New-York. General Lee, while the British were yet in possession of the capital of Massachusetts, had been detached from Cambridge, to put Long-Island and New-York into a posture of defence. As the departure of the British from Boston became more certain, the probability of their instantly going to New-York, increased the necessity of collecting a force for its safety. It had been therefore agreed in a
Mar. 13. council of war, that five regiments, together with a rifle battalion, should march without delay to New-York, and that the states of New-York and New-Jersey should be requested to furnish the former two thousand, and the latter

latter one thousand men for its immediate defence. General Washington soon followed, and early in April fixed his head quarters in that city. A new distribution of the American army took place; part was left in Massachusetts, between two and three thousand were ordered to Canada, but the greater part rendezvoused at New-York. 1776.

Experience had taught the Americans the difficulty of attacking an army after it had effected a lodgment. They therefore made strenuous exertions to prevent the British from enjoying the advantages in New-York, which had resulted from their having been permitted to land and fortify themselves in Boston. The sudden commencement of hostilities in Massachusetts, together with the previous undisturbed landing of the royal army, allowed no time for deliberating on a system of war. A change of circumstances indicated the propriety of fixing on a plan for conducting the defence of the new-formed states. On this occasion General Washington, after much thought, determined on a war of posts. This mode of conducting military operations gave confidence to the Americans, and besides, it both retarded and alarmed their adversaries. The soldiers in the American army were new levies, and had not yet learned to stand uncovered before the instruments of death; habituating them to the sound of fire-arms, while they were sheltered from danger, was one step towards inspiring them with a portion of mechanical courage. The British remembered Bunker's Hill, and had no small reverence for even slight fortifications, when defended by freemen. From views of this kind, works were erected in and about New-York, on Long-Island, and the heights of Haerlem. These, besides batteries, were field redoubts, formed of earth, with a parapet and ditch. The former were sometimes fraised, and the latter palisadoed, but they were in no instance formed to sustain a siege. Slight as they were, the campaign was nearly wasted away before they were so far reduced, as to permit the royal army to penetrate into the country.

1776. The war having taken a more important turn than in the preceding year had been foreseen, Congress, at the opening of the campaign, found themselves destitute of a force sufficient for their defence. They therefore in June determined on a plan to re-inforce their continental army, by bringing into the field a new species of troops, that would be more permanent than the common militia, and yet more easily raised than regulars. With this view they instituted a flying camp, to consist of an intermediate corps, between regular soldiers and militia. Ten thousand men were called for from the States of Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Delaware, to be in constant service to the first day of the ensuing December. Congress at the same time called for 13,800 of the common militia from Massachusetts, Connecticut, New-York, and New-Jersey. The men for forming the flying camp were generally procured, but there were great deficiencies of the militia, and many of those who obeyed their country's call so far as to turn out, manifested a reluctance to submit to the necessary discipline of camps.

June 3.

The difficulty of providing the troops with arms while before Boston, was exceeded by the superior difficulty of supplying them in their new position. By the returns of the garrison at Fort Montgomery, in the Highlands, in April, it appeared that there were 208 privates, and only forty-one muskets fit for use. In the garrison at Fort Constitution there were 136 men, and only 68 muskets fit for use. Flints were also much wanted. Lead would have been equally deficient, had not a supply for the musquetry been obtained by stripping dwelling-houses.

The uncertainty of the place where the British would commence their operations, added much to the embarrassment of General Washington. Not only each Colony, but each sea-port town, supposed itself to be the object of the British, and was ardent in its supplications to the commander in chief for his peculiar attention. The people of Massachusetts were strongly impressed with an idea, that the evacuation of Boston was only a feint, and that the British army would soon return. They were for that reason very desirous, that the continental troops should not be with-

drawn

drawn from their ftate. The inhabitants of Rhode-Ifland urged, in a long petition, that their maritime fituation expofed them to uncommon danger, while their great exertions in fitting out armed veffels had deprived them of many of their citizens; they therefore prayed for a body of continental foldiers to be ftationed for their conftant and peculiar defence. So various were the applications for troops, fo numerous the calls for arms, that a decided conduct became neceffary to prevent the feeble American force, and the deficient ftock of public arms from being divided and fubdivided, fo as to be unequal to the proper defence of any one place. 1776.

In this crifis of particular danger, the people of New-York acted with fpirit. Though they knew they were to receive the firft impreffion of the Britifh army, yet their convention refolved, "that all perfons refiding within the ftate of New-York, and claiming protection from its laws, owed it allegiance, and that any perfon owing it allegance, and levying war againft the ftate, or being an adherent to the King of Great Britain, fhould be deemed guilty of treafon and fuffer death." They alfo refolved that one-fourth of the militia of Weft-Chefter, Dutchefs, and Orange counties, fhould be forthwith drawn out for the defence of the liberties, property, wives, and children, of the good people of the ftate, to be continued in fervice till the laft day of December, and "that as the inhabitants of King's County had determined not to oppofe the enemy, a committee fhould be appointed to inquire into the authenticity of thefe reports, and to difarm and fecure the difaffected; to remove or deftroy the ftock of grain, and, if neceffary, to lay the whole country wafte."

The two royal commiffioners, Admiral and General Howe, thought proper, before they commenced their military operations, to try what might be done in their civil capacity, towards effecting a re-union between Great Britain and the Colonies. It was one of the firft acts of Lord Howe, to fend on fhore a circular letter to feveral of the royal governors in America, informing them of the late act of Parliament, "for reftoring peace to the Colonies,

1776. nies, and granting pardon to ſuch as ſhould deſerve mercy," and deſiring them to publiſh a declaration which accompanied the ſame. In this he informed the Coloniſts of the power with which his brother and he were intruſted, "of granting general or particular pardons to all thoſe who, though they had deviated from their allegiance, were willing to return to their duty," and of declaring "any colony, province, county, or town, port, diſtrict, or place, to be at the peace of his Majeſty." Congreſs, impreſſed with a belief, that the propoſals of the commiſſioners, inſtead of diſuniting the people, would have a contrary effect, ordered them to be ſpeedily publiſhed in the ſeveral American newſpapers. Had a redreſs of grievances been at this late hour offered, though the honour of the ſtates was involved in ſupporting their late declaration of independence, yet the love of peace, and the bias of great numbers to their Parent State, would in all probability have made a powerful party for reſcinding the act of ſeparation, and for re-uniting with Great Britain. But when it appeared that the power of the royal commiſſioners was little more than to grant pardons, Congreſs appealed to the good ſenſe of the people for the neceſſity of adhering to the act of independence. The reſolution for publiſhing the circular letter, and the declaration of the royal commiſſioners, aſſigned a reaſon thereof to be, "that the good people of the United States may be informed of what nature are the commiſſioners, and what the terms, with expectation of which the inſidious Court of Great Britain had endeavoured to amuſe and diſarm them, and that the few who ſtill remain ſuſpended by a hope, founded either in the juſtice or moderation of their late King, may now at length be convinced that the valour alone of their country is to ſave its liberties."

About the ſame time flags were ſent aſhore by Lord Howe with a letter directed to George Waſhington, Eſq. which he refuſed to receive as not being addreſſed to him with the title due to his rank. In his letter to Congreſs on this ſubject he wrote as follows, "I would not on any occaſion ſacrifice eſſentials to punctilio, but in this inſtance I deemed it a duty to my country and appointment, to inſiſt

ſiſt

fist on that respect, which in any other than a public view I would willingly have waved." Congress applauded his conduct in a public resolution, and at the same time directed, that no letter or message should be received on any occasion whatever, from the enemy, by the commander in chief, or others the commanders of the American army, but such as were directed to them in the characters they severally sustained. 1776.

Some time after Adjutant-general Patterson was sent to New-York by General Howe, with a letter addressed to General Washington, &c. &c. &c. On an interview the Adjutant-general, after expressing his high esteem for the person and character of the American General, and declaring, that it was not intended to derogate from the respect due to his rank, expressed his hopes, that the *et ceteras* would remove the impediments to their correspondence. General Washington replied, "That a letter directed to any person in a public character should have some description of it, otherwise it would appear a mere private letter; that it was true the *et ceteras* implied every thing, but they also implied any thing, and that he should therefore decline the receiving any letter directed to him as a private person, when it related to his public station. A long conference ensued, in which the Adjutant-general observed, "that the commissioners were armed with great powers, and would be very happy in effecting an accommodation." He received for answer, "that from what appeared, their powers were only to grant pardon; that they who had committed no fault wanted no pardon." Soon after this interview a letter from Howe, respecting prisoners, which was properly addressed to Washington, was received.

While the British, by their manifestoes and declarations, were endeavouring to separate those who preferred a reconciliation with Great Britain from those who were the friends of independence, Congress, by a similar policy, was attempting to detach the foreigners, who had come with the royal troops, from the service of his Britannic Majesty. Before hostilities had commenced, the following resolution was adopted and circulated among those

on

1776. Aug. 14. on whom it was intended to operate. "Resolved, that these states will receive all such foreigners who shall leave the armies of his Britannic Majesty in America, and shall chuse to become members of any of these states, and they shall be protected in the free exercise of their respective religions, and be invested with the rights, privileges, and immunities of natives, as established by the laws of these states; and moreover, that this Congress will provide for every such person fifty acres of unappropriated lands in some of these states, to be held by him and his heirs as absolute property."

The numbers which were prepared to oppose the British, when they should disembark, made them for some time cautious of proceeding to their projected land operations, but the superiority of their navy enabled them to go by water whithersoever they pleased.

July 12. A British forty-gun ship, with some smaller vessels, sailed up North River without receiving any damage of consequence, though fired upon from the batteries of New-York, Paules-Hook, Red-Bank, and Governor's Island. An attempt was made, not long after, with two fire-ships, to destroy the British vessels in the North River, but without effecting any thing more than the burning of a tender. They were also attacked with row gallies, but to little purpose. After some time the Phœnix and Rose men of war came down the river, and joined the fleet.—Every effort of the Americans from their batteries on land, as well as their exertions on the water, proved ineffectual. The British ships passed with less loss than was generally expected, but nevertheless the damage they received was such as deterred them from frequently repeating the experiment. In two or three instances they ascended the North River, and in one or two the East River, but those which sailed up the former speedily returned, and by their return a free communication was opened through the upper part of the state.

The American army in and near New-York amounted to 17,225 men. These were mostly new troops, and were divided in many small and unconnected posts, some of which were fifteen miles removed from others. The

British

Britiſh force about New-York was increaſing by frequent ſucceſſive arrivals from Halifax, South-Carolina, Florida, the Weſt-Indies, and Europe. But ſo many unforeſeen delays had taken place, that the month of Auguſt was far advanced before they were in a condition to open the campaign. 1776.

When all things were ready, the Britiſh commanders reſolved to make their firſt attempt upon Long-Iſland. This was preferred to New-York, as it abounded with thoſe ſupplies which their forces required.

The Britiſh landed without oppoſition between two ſmall towns, Utrecht and Graveſend. The American works protected a ſmall peninſula, having Wallabout-Bay to the left, and ſtretching over to Red-Hook on the right, the Eaſt River being in their rear. General Sullivan, with a ſtrong force, was encamped within theſe works at Brooklyne. From the eaſt ſide of the narrows runs a ridge of hills covered with thick wood, about five or ſix miles in length, which terminates near Jamaica.—There were three paſſes through theſe hills, one near the narrows, a ſecond on the Flatbuſh road, and a third on the Bedford road, and they are all defenſible. Theſe were the only roads which could be paſſed from the ſouth ſide of the hills to the American lines, except a road which led round the eaſterly end of the hills to Jamaica. The Americans had 800 men on each of theſe roads, and Colonel Miles was placed with his battalion of riflemen, to guard the road from the ſouth of the hills to Jamaica, and to watch the motions of the Britiſh.

General de Heiſter, with his Heſſians, took poſt at Flatbuſh in the evening. In the following night the greater part of the Britiſh army, commanded by General Clinton, marched to gain the road leading round the eaſterly end of the hills to Jamaica, and to turn the left of the Americans. He arrived about two hours before day within half a mile of this road. One of his parties fell in with a patrole of American officers, and took them all priſoners, which prevented the early tranſmiſſion of intelligence. Upon the firſt appearance of day General Clinton advanced, and took poſſeſſion of the heights over which Aug 26.

1776. which the road passed. General Grant, with the left wing, advanced along the coast by the west road near the narrows; but this was intended chiefly as a feint.

The guard which was stationed at this road fled without making any resistance. A few of them were afterwards rallied, and Lord Stirling advanced with 1500 men, and took possession of a hill about two miles from the American camp, and in front of General Grant.

Aug. 27. An attack was made very early in the morning by the Hessians from Flatbush, under General de Heister, and by General Grant on the coast, and was well supported for a considerable time by both sides. The Americans who opposed General de Heister were first informed of the approach of General Clinton, who had come round on their left. They immediately began to retreat to their camp, but were intercepted by the right wing under General Clinton, who got into the rear of their left, and attacked them with his light infantry and dragoons while returning to their lines. They were driven back till they were met by the Hessians. They were thus alternately chased and intercepted, between General de Heister and General Clinton. Some of their regiments nevertheless found their way to the camp. The Americans under Lord Stirling, consisting of Colonel Miles's two battalions, Colonel Atlee's, Colonel Smallwood's, and Colonel Hatche's, regiments, who were engaged with General Grant, fought with great resolution for about six hours. They were uninformed of the movements made by General Clinton, till some of the troops under his command had traversed the whole extent of country in their rear. Their retreat was thus intercepted, but several, notwithstanding, broke through and got into the woods; many threw themselves into the marsh, some were drowned, and others perished in the mud, but a considerable number escaped by this way to their lines.

The King's troops displayed great valour throughout the whole day. The variety of the ground occasioned a succession of small engagements, pursuits, and slaughter, which lasted for many hours. British discipline in every instance triumphed over the native valour of raw troops,

who

who had never been in action, and whose officers were unacquainted with the stratagems of war. 1776.

The loss of the British and Hessians was about 450. The killed, wounded, and prisoners, of the Americans, including those who were drowned or perished in the woods or mud, considerably exceeded a thousand. Among the prisoners of the latter were two of their general officers, Sullivan and Lord Stirling; three colonels, 4 lieutenant-colonels, 3 majors, 18 captains, 43 lieutenants, and 11 ensigns. Smallwood's regiment, the officers of which were young men of the best families in the state of Maryland, sustained a loss of 259 men. The British after their victory were so impetuous, that it was with difficulty, they could be restrained from attacking the American lines.

In the time of, and subsequent to the enagement, General Washington drew over to Long-Island, the greatest part of his army. After he had collected his principal force there, it was his wish and hope, that Sir William Howe would attempt to storm the works on the island. These, though insufficient to stand a regular siege, were strong enough to resist a coup de main. The remembrance of Bunker's-Hill, and a desire to spare his men, restrained the British General from making an assault. On the contrary, he made demonstrations of proceeding by siege, and broke ground within three hundred yards to the left at Putnam's redoubt. Though General Washington wished for an assault, yet being certain that his works would be untenable when the British batteries should be fully opened, he called a council Aug. 30. of war to consult on the measures proper to be taken. It was then determined that the objects in view were in no degree proportioned to the dangers to which, by a continuation on the island, they would be exposed. Conformably to this opinion, dispositions were made for an immediate retreat. This commenced soon after it was dark from two points, the upper and lower ferries, on East River. General M'Dougal regulated the embarkation at one, and Colonel Knox at the other. The intention of evacuating the island had been so prudently concealed

1776. concealed from the Americans, that they knew not whither they were going, but supposed to attack the enemy. The field artillery, tents, baggage, and about 9000 men, were conveyed to the city of New-York over East River, more than a mile wide, in less than 13 hours, and without the knowledge of the British, though not six hundred yards distant. Providence in a remarkable manner favoured the retreating army. For some time after the Americans began to cross, the state of the tide and a strong north-east wind made it impossible for them to make use of their sail boats, and their whole number of row boats was insufficient for completing the business, in the course of the night. But about eleven o'clock the wind died away, and soon after sprung up at south-east and blew fresh, which rendered the sail boats of use, and at the same time made the passage from the island to the city, direct, easy, and expeditious. Towards morning an extreme thick fog came up, which hovered over Long-Island, and by concealing the Americans, enabled them to complete their retreat without interruption, though the day had begun to dawn some time before it was finished. By a mistake in the transmission of orders, the American lines were evacuated for about three quarters of an hour before the last embarkation took place, but the British, though so near, that their working parties could be distinctly heard, being inveloped in the fog knew nothing of the matter. The lines were repossessed and held till six o'clock in the morning, when every thing except some heavy cannon was removed. General Mifflin, who commanded the rear guard, left the lines, and under the cover of the fog got off safe. In about half an hour the fog cleared away, and the British entered the works which had been just relinquished. Had the wind not shifted, the half of the American army could not have crossed, and even as it was, if the fog had not concealed their rear, it must have been discovered, and could hardly have escaped. General Sullivan, who was taken prisoner on Long-Island, was immediately sent on parole, with the following verbal message from Lord Howe to Congress, "That though he could not at present treat

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with them in that character, yet he was very desirous of having a conference with some of the members, whom he would consider as private gentlemen; that he with his brother the General, had full power to compromise the dispute between Great Britain and America, upon terms advantageous to both—that he wished a compact might be settled at a time when no decisive blow was struck, and neither party could say it was compelled to enter into such agreement—that were they disposed to treat, many things which they had not yet asked, might and ought to be granted; and that if upon conference they found any probable ground of accommodation, the authority of Congress would be afterwards acknowledged to render the treaty complete." Three days after this message was received, General Sullivan was requested to inform Lord Howe, "That Congress being the representatives of the free and independent States of America, they cannot with propriety send any of their members to confer with his Lordship in their private characters, but that ever desirous of establishing peace on reasonable terms, they will send a committee of their body, to know whether he has any authority to treat with persons authorised by Congress for that purpose, on behalf of America, and what that authority is; and to hear such propositions as he shall think fit to make respecting the same." They elected Dr. Franklin, John Adams, and Edward Rutlege, their committee for this purpose. In a few days they met Lord Howe on Staten-Island, and were received with great politeness. On their return they made a report of their conference, which they summed up by saying, "It did not appear to your committee that his Lordship's commission contained any other authority than that expressed in the act of Parliament—namely, that of granting pardons, with such exceptions as the commissioners shall think proper to make, and of declaring America, or any part of it, to be in the King's peace on submission: for as to the power of inquiring into the state of America, which his Lordship mentioned to us, and of conferring and consulting with any persons the commissioners might think proper, and representing the result 1776.

of

1776. of such conversation to the Ministry, who, provided the Colonies would subject themselves, might after all, or might not, at their pleasure, make any alterations in the former instructions to governors, or propose in Parliament, any amendment of the acts complained of, we apprehend any expectation from the effect of such a power, would have been too uncertain and precarious, to be relied on by America, had she still continued in her state of dependence." Lord Howe had ended the conference on his part, by expressing his regard for America, and the extreme pain he would suffer in being obliged to distress those whom he so much regarded. Dr. Franklin thanked him for his regards, and assured him, that the Americans would shew their gratitude, by endeavouring to lessen as much as possible all pain he might feel on their account, by exerting their utmost abilities in taking good care of themselves."

The committee in every respect maintained the dignity of Congress. Their conduct and sentiments were such as became their character. The friends to independence rejoiced that nothing resulted from this interview that might disunite the people. Congress, trusting to the good sense of their countrymen, ordered the whole to be printed for their information. All the states would have then rejoiced at less beneficial terms than they obtained about seven years after. But Great Britain counted on the certainty of their absolute conquest, or unconditional submission. Her offers therefore comported so little with the feelings of America, that they neither caused demur nor disunion among the new-formed states.

The unsuccessful termination of the action on the 27th led to consequences more seriously alarming to the Americans than the loss of their men. The army was universally dispirited. The militia ran off by companies. Their example infected the regular regiments. The loose footing on which the militia came to camp, made it hazardous to exercise over them that discipline, without which, an army is a mob. To restrain one part of an army while another claimed and exercised the right of doing as they pleased, was no less impracticable than absurd.

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A council of war, recommended to act on the defensive, and not to risque the army for the sake of New-York. To retreat, subjected the commander in chief to reflections painful to bear, and yet impolitic to refute: to stand his ground, and by suffering himself to be surrounded, to hazard the fate of America on one decisive engagement, was contrary to every rational plan of defending the wide-extended states committed to his care. A middle line between abandoning and defending was therefore for a short time adopted. The public stores were moved to Dobb's ferry, about 26 miles from New-York; 12,000 men were ordered to the northern extremity of New-York Island, and 4500 to remain for the defence of the city, while the remainder occupied the intermediate space, with orders either to support the city or Kingsbridge, as exigencies might require. Before the British landed, it was impossible to tell what place would be first attacked: this made it necessary to erect works for the defence of a variety of places as well as of New-York. Though every thing was abandoned when the crisis came that either the city must be relinquished, or the army risqued for its defence, yet from the delays occasioned by the redoubts and other works which had been erected on the idea of making the defence of the states a war of posts, a whole campaign was lost to the British, and saved to the Americans. The year began with hopes that Great Britain would recede from her demands, and therefore every plan of defence was on a temporary system. The declaration of independence, which the violence of Great-Britain forced the Colonies to adopt in July, though neither foreseen nor intended at the commencement of the year, pointed out the necessity of organizing an army on new terms, correspondent to the enlarged objects for which they had resolved to contend. Congress accordingly determined to raise 88 battalions, to serve during the war. Under these circumstances, to wear away the campaign with as little misfortune as possible, and thereby to gain time for raising a permanent army against the next year, was to the Americans a matter of the last importance. Though the commander in chief abandoned those works,

1776. Sept. 7.

Sept. 16.

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1776. which had engroſſed much time and attention, yet the advantage reſulting from the delays they occaſioned, far overbalanced the expence incurred by their erection.

The ſame ſhort-ſighted politicians, who had before cenſured General Waſhington for his cautious conduct in not ſtorming the Britiſh lines at Boſton, renewed their clamours againſt him for adopting this evacuating and retreating ſyſtem. Supported by a conſciouſneſs of his own integrity, and by a full conviction that theſe meaſures were beſt calculated for ſecuring the independence of America, he, for the good of his country, voluntarily ſubjected his fame to be overſhadowed by a temporary cloud.

General Howe having prepared every thing for a deſcent on New-York Iſland, began to land his men under
Sept. 15. cover of ſhips of war, between Kepps'-Bay and Turtle-Bay. A breaſt work had been erected in the vicinity, and a party ſtationed in it to oppoſe the Britiſh, in caſe of their attempting to land; but on the firſt appearance of danger they ran off in confuſion. The commander in chief came up, and in vain attempted to rally them. Though the Britiſh in ſight did not exceed ſixty, he could not either by example, entreaty, or authority, prevail on a ſuperior force to ſtand their ground, and face that inconſiderable number. Such daſtardly conduct raiſed a tempeſt in the uſually tranquil mind of General Waſhington. Having embarked in the American cauſe from the pureſt principles, he viewed with infinite concern this ſhameful behaviour, as threatening ruin to his country. He recollected the many declarations of Congreſs, of the army, and of the inhabitants, preferring liberty to life, and death to diſhonour, and contraſted them with their preſent ſcandalous flight. His ſoul was harrowed up with apprehenſions that his country would be conquered—her army diſgraced, and her liberties deſtroyed. He anticipated in imagination, that the Americans would appear to poſterity in the light of high-ſounding boaſters, who bluſtered when danger was at a diſtance, but ſhrunk at the ſhadow of oppoſition. Extenſive confiſcations and numerous attainders preſented themſelves in full view to his agitated mind. He ſaw, in imagination, new-formed ſtates, with the

the means of defence in their hands, and the glorious prospects of liberty before them, levelled to the dust, and such constitutions imposed on them as were likely to crush the vigour of the human mind, while the unsuccessful issue of the present struggle would for ages to come, deter posterity from the bold design of asserting their rights. Impressed with these ideas he hazarded his person for some considerable time in rear of his own men and in front of the enemy with his horse's head towards the latter, as if in expectation that by an honourable death he might escape the infamy he dreaded from the dastardly conduct of troops on whom he could place no dependence. His aids and the confidential friends around his person, by indirect violence compelled him to retire. In consequence of their address and importunity, a life was saved for public service, which otherwise, from a sense of honour and a gust of passion, seemed to be devoted to almost certain destruction. 1776.

On the day after this shameful flight of part of the American army, a skirmish took place between two battalions of light infantry and highlanders, commanded by Brigadier Leslie, and some detachments from the American army, under the command of Lieutenant-colonel Knowlton of Connecticut, and Major Leitch of Virginia. The colonel was killed and the major badly wounded. Their men behaved with great bravery, and fairly beat their adversaries from the field. Most of these were the same men who had disgraced themselves the day before, by running away,—struck with a sense of shame for their late misbehaviour, they had offered themselves as volunteers, and requested the commander in chief to give them an opportunity to retrieve their honour. Their good conduct at this second engagement proved an antidote to the poison of their example on the preceding day. It demonstrated that the Americans only wanted resolution and good officers to be on a footing with the British, and inspired them with hopes that a little more experience would enable them to assume, not only the name and garb, but the spirit and firmness of soldiers.

The Americans having evacuated the city of New-York, a brigade of the British army marched into it. They

1776. They had been a few days in possession when a dreadful fire, most probably occasioned by the disorderly conduct of some British sailors, who had been permitted to regale themselves on shore, broke out, and consumed about a thousand houses. Dry weather and a brisk wind spread the flames to such an extent, that had it not been for great exertions of the troops and sailors, the whole city must have shared the same fate. After the Americans had evacuated New-York, they retired to the north end of the island on which the city is erected. In about four weeks General Howe began to execute a plan for cutting off General Washington's communication with the eastern states, and enclosing him so as to compel a general engagement on the island. With this view, the greater part of the royal army passed through Hellgate,
Oct. 12. entered the sound, and landed on Frog's Neck, in West-Chester county. Two days after they made this move-
Oct. 14. ment, General Lee arrived from his late successful command to the southward. He found that there was a prevailing disposition among the officers in the American
Oct. 16. army for remaining on New-York Island. A council of war was called, in which General Lee gave such convincing reasons for quitting it, that they resolved immediately to withdraw the bulk of the army. He also pressed the expediency of evacuating Fort Washington; but in this he was opposed by General Greene, who argued that the possession of that post would divert a large body of the enemy from joining their main force, and in conjunction with Fort Lee, would be of great use in covering the transportation of provisions and stores up the North-River, for the service of the American troops. He added farther, that the garrison could be brought off at any time by boats from the Jersey side of the river. His opinion prevailed; though the system of evacuating and retreating was in general adopted, an exception was made in favour of Fort Washington, and near 3000 men were assigned for its defence.

Oct. 18. The royal army, after a halt of six days at Frog's Neck, advanced near to New-Rochelle. On their march they sustained a considerable loss by a party of Americans, whom

whom General Lee posted behind a wall. After three 1776.
days, General Howe moved the right and center of his
army two miles to the northward of New-Rochelle, on Oct. 21.
the road to the White Plains, and there he received a large reinforcement.

General Washington, while retreating from New-York Island, was careful to make a front towards the British, from East-Chester almost to White Plains, in order to secure the march of those who were behind, and to defend the removal of the sick, the cannon, and stores of his army. In this manner his troops made a line of small detached and intrenched camps on the several heights and strong grounds, from Valentine's Hill on the right, to the vicinity of the White Plains on the left.

The royal army moved in two columns, and took a Oct. 25.
position with the Brunx in front, upon which the Americans assembled their main force at White Plains, behind intrenchments. A general action was hourly expected, and a considerable one took place, in which several hundreds fell. The Americans were commanded by General
M'Dougal, and the British by General Leslie. While Oct. 28.
they were engaged the American baggage was moved off, in full view of the British army. Soon after this, General Washington changed his front, his left wing stood fast, and his right fell back to some hills. In this position, which was an admirable one in a military point of view, he both desired and expected an action; but General Howe declined it, and drew off his forces towards Dobbs' Ferry. The Americans afterwards retired to North-Castle.

General Washington, with part of his army, crossed the North-River, and took post in the neighbourhood of Fort Lee. A force of about 7500 men was left at North-Castle, under General Lee.

The Americans having retired, Sir William Howe Nov. 12.
determined to improve the opportunity of their absence, for the reduction of Fort Washington. This, the only post the Americans then held on New-York Island, was under the command of Colonel Magaw. The royal army made four attacks upon it. The first on the north side, was led on by General Kniphausen; the second on the

1776. Nov. 16. the east by General Matthews, supported by Lord Cornwallis. The third was under the direction of Lieutenant-colonel Stirling, and the fourth was commanded by Lord Piercy. The troops under Kniphausen, when advancing to the fort, had to pass through a thick wood, which was occupied by Colonel Rawling's regiment of riflemen, and suffered very much from their well-directed fire. During this attack, a body of the British light infantry advanced against a party of the Americans, who were annoying them from behind rocks and trees, and obliged them to disperse. Lord Piercy carried an advance work on his side, and Lieutenant-colonel Stirling forced his way up a steep height and took 170 prisoners. Their outworks being carried, the Americans left their lines and crowded into the fort. Colonel Rahl, who led the right column of Kniphausen's attack, pushed forward and lodged his column within an hundred yards of the fort, and was there soon joined by the left column—the garrison surrendered on terms of capitulation, by which the men were to be considered as prisoners of war, and the officers to keep their baggage and side arms. The number of prisoners amounted to 2700. The loss of the British, inclusive of killed and wounded, was about
Nov. 18. 1200. Shortly after Fort Washington had surrendered, Lord Cornwallis with a considerable force passed over to attack Fort Lee, on the opposite Jersey shore.

The garrison was saved by an immediate evacuation, but at the expence of their artillery and stores. General Washington about this time retreated to New-Ark. Having abundant reason from the posture of affairs, to count on the necessity of a farther retreat, he asked Colonel Reed—"Should we retreat to the back parts of Pennsylvania, will the Pennsylvanians support us?" The Colonel replied, if the lower countries are subdued and give up, the back countries will do the same. The General replied, we must retire to Augusta county in Virginia; numbers will be obliged to repair to us for safety, and we must try what we can do in carrying on a predatory war, and if overpowered, we must cross the Allegany mountains."

While

1776.

While a tide of ſucceſs was flowing in upon General Howe, he and his brother, as royal commiſſioners, iſſued a proclamation, in which they commanded, "All perſons aſſembled in arms againſt his Majeſty's government to diſband, and all general or provincial congreſſes to deſiſt from their treaſonable actings, and to relinquiſh their uſurped power." They alſo declared, "that every perſon who, within ſixty days, ſhould appear before the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, or Commander in Chief of any of his Majeſty's Colonies, or before the general or commanding officer of his Majeſty's forces, and claim the benefit of the proclamation, and teſtify his obedience to the laws, by ſubſcribing a certain declaration, ſhould obtain a full and free pardon of all treaſons by him committed, and of all forfeitures and penalties for the ſame." Many who had been in office, and taken an active part in ſupport of the new government, accepted of theſe offers, and made their peace by ſubmiſſion. Some who had been the greateſt bluſterers in favour of independence, veered round to the ſtrongeſt ſide. Men of fortune generally gave way; the few who ſtood firm, were moſtly to be found in the middle ranks of the people.

The term of time for which the American ſoldiers had engaged to ſerve, ended in November or December, with no other exception than that of two companies of artillery belonging to the ſtate of New-York, which were engaged for the war. The army had been organiſed at the cloſe of the preceding year, on the fallacious idea, that an accommodation would take place within a twelve month. Even the flying camp, though inſtituted after the proſpect of that event had vaniſhed, was enliſted only till the firſt of December, from a preſumption that the campaign would terminate by that time.

When it was expected that the conquerors would retire to winter quarters, they commenced a new plan of operations, more alarming than all their previous conqueſts. The reduction of Fort Waſhington, the evacuation of Fort Lee, and the diminution of the American army, by the departure of thoſe whoſe time of ſervice had expired, encouraged the Britiſh, notwithſtanding the

1776. ſeverity of the winter and the badneſs of the roads, to purſue the remaining inconſiderable continental force, with the proſpect of annihilating it. By this turn of affairs, the interior country was ſurpriſed into confuſion, and found an enemy within its bowels, without a ſufficient army to oppoſe it. To retreat was the only expedient left. This having commenced, Lord Cornwallis followed, and was cloſe in the rear of General Waſhington as he retreated ſucceſſively to New-Ark, to Brunſwick, to Princeton, to Trenton, and to the Pennſylvania ſide of the Delaware. The purſuit was urged with ſo much rapidity, that the rear of the one army pulling down bridges was often within ſight, and ſhot off the van of the other building them up.

This retreat into and through New-Jerſey was attended with almoſt every circumſtance that could occaſion embarraſſment and depreſſion of ſpirits. It commenced in a few days after the Americans had loſt 2700 men in Fort Waſhington. In fourteen days after that event, the whole flying camp claimed their diſcharge. This was followed by the almoſt daily departure of others, whoſe engagements terminated nearly about the ſame time. A farther diſappointment happened to General Waſhington at this time; Gates had been ordered by Congreſs to ſend two regiments from Ticonderoga, to re-inforce his army. Two Jerſey regiments were put under the command of General St. Clair, and forwarded in obedience to this order, but the period for which they were enliſted was expired, and the moment they entered their own ſtate, they went off to a man. A few officers without a ſingle private, were all that General St. Clair brought of theſe two regiments, to the aid of the retreating American army. The few who remained with General Waſhington were in a moſt forlorn condition; they conſiſted moſtly of the troops which had garriſoned Fort Lee, and had been compelled to abandon that poſt ſo ſuddenly, that they commenced their retreat without tents or blankets, and without any utenſils to dreſs their proviſions. In this ſituation they performed a march of about ninety miles, and had the addreſs to prolong it to the

1776.

the ſpace of nineteen days. As the retreating Americans marched through the country, ſcarcely one of the inhabitants joined them, while numbers were daily flocking to the royal army, to make their peace and obtain protection. They ſaw on the one ſide a numerous well-appointed and full clad army, dazzling their eyes with the elegance of uniformity; on the other a few poor fellows, who, from their ſhabby cloathing, were called ragamuffins, fleeing for their ſafety. Not only the common people changed ſides in this gloomy ſtate of public affairs, but ſome of the leading men in New-Jerſey and Pennſylvania adopted the ſame expedient. Among theſe Mr. Galloway, and the family of the Allens of Philadelphia, were moſt diſtinguiſhed. The former, and one of the latter, had been members of Congreſs. In this hour of adverſity they came within the Britiſh lines, and ſurrendered themſelves to the conquerors, alledging in juſtification of their conduct, that though they had joined with their countrymen in ſeeking for a redreſs of grievances in a conſtitutional way, they had never approved of the meaſures lately adopted, and were in particular, at all times, averſe to independence.

On the day General Waſhington retreated over the Delaware, the Britiſh took poſſeſſion of Rhode-Iſland without any loſs, and at the ſame time blocked up Commodore Hopkins' ſquadron, and a number of privateers at Providence.

In this period, when the American army was relinquiſhing its general, the people giving up the cauſe, ſome of their leaders going over to the enemy, and the Britiſh commanders ſucceeding in every enterpriſe, General Lee was taken priſoner at Baſkenridge, by Lieutenant-colonel Harcourt. This cauſed a depreſſion of ſpirits among the Americans, far exceeding any real injury done to their eſſential intereſts. He had been repeatedly ordered to come forward with his diviſion, and join General Waſhington, but theſe orders were not obeyed. This circumſtance, and the dangerous criſis of public affairs, together with his being alone at ſome diſtance from the troops which he commanded, begat ſuſpicions that he choſe to

fall

1776. fall into the hands of the British. Though these apprehensions were without foundation, they produced the same extensive mischief as if they had been realities. The Americans had reposed extravagant confidence in his military talents, and experience of regular European war. Merely to have lost such an idol of the state at any time, would have been distressful, but losing him under circumstances, which favoured an opinion that, despairing of the American cause, he chose to be taken a prisoner, was to many an extinguishment of every hope.

By the advance of the British into New-Jersey, the neighbourhood of Philadelphia became the seat of war. This prevented that undisturbed attention to public business which the deliberations of Congress required. They
Dec. 12. therefore adjourned themselves to meet in eight days at
20. Baltimore, resolving at the same time, "that General Washington would be possessed of full power to order and direct all things relative to the department and the operations of war."

The activity of the British in the close of the campaign, seemed in some measure to compensate for their tardiness, in the beginning of it.

Hitherto they had succeeded in every scheme; they marched up and down the Jersey side of the river Delaware, and through the country, without any molestation. All opposition to the re-establishment of royal government seemed to be on the point of expiring. The Americans had thus far acted without system, or rather feebly executed what had been tardily adopted. Though the war was changed from its first ground, a redress of grievances to a struggle for sovereignty, yet some considerable time elapsed before arrangements conformable to this new system were adopted, and a much longer before they were carried into execution.

With the year 1776, a retreating, half-naked army was to be dismissed, and the prospect of a new one was both distant and uncertain. The recently assumed independence of the States was apparently on the verge of dissolution. It was supposed by many, that the record of their existence would have been no more than that "a fickle people, impatient of the restraints of regular government, had

had in a fit of paſſion aboliſhed that of Great Britain, and 1776.
eſtabliſhed in its room free conſtitutions of their own; but these new eſtabliſhments, from want of wiſdom in their rulers, or ſpirit in their people, were no ſooner formed than annihilated. The leading men, in their reſpective governments, and the principal members of Congreſs (for by this name the inſurgents diſtinguiſhed their ſupreme council) were hanged, and their eſtates confiſcated. Waſhington, the gallant leader of their military eſtabliſhments—worthy of a better fate—deſerted by his army—abandoned by his country—ruſhing on the thickeſt battalions of the foe, provoked a friendly Britiſh bayonet to deliver him from an ignominious death."

To human wiſdom it appeared probable that ſuch a paragraph would have cloſed ſome ſmall ſection in the hiſtory of England, treating of the American troubles, but there is in human affairs an ultimate point of elevation or depreſſion, beyond which they neither grow better nor worſe, but turn back in a contrary courſe.

In proportion as difficulties increaſed, Congreſs redoubled their exertions to oppoſe them; they addreſſed Dec. 10.
the ſtates in animated language, calculated to remove their deſpondency, renew their hopes, and confirm their reſolutions.

They at the ſame time diſpatched gentlemen of character and influence to excite the militia to take the field. General Mifflin was, on this occaſion, particularly uſeful; he exerted his great abilities in rouſing his fellow citizens, by animated and affectionate addreſſes, to turn out in defence of their endangered liberties.

Congreſs alſo recommended to each of the United 11.
States "to appoint a day of ſolemn faſting and humiliation, to implore of Almighty God the forgiveneſs of their many ſins, and to beg the countenance and aſſiſtance of his Providence in the proſecution of the preſent juſt and neceſſary war."

In the dangerous ſituation to which every thing dear to the friends of independence was reduced, Congreſs transferred extraordinary powers to General Waſhington, by a reſolution, expreſſed in the following words:

1776. Dec. 27. "The unjuſt, but determined purpoſe of the Britiſh court to enſlave theſe free ſtates, obvious through every deluſive inſinuation to the contrary, having placed things in ſuch a ſituation that the very exiſtence of civil liberty now depends on the right execution of military powers, and the vigorous deciſive conduct of theſe being impoſſible to diſtant, numerous, and deliberative bodies; this Congreſs, having maturely conſidered the preſent criſis, and having perfect reliance on the wiſdom, vigour, and uprightneſs of General Waſhington, do hereby

Reſolve, that General Waſhington ſhall be, and he is hereby veſted with full, ample, and complete powers, to raiſe and collect together, in the moſt ſpeedy and effectual manner, from any or all of theſe United States, ſixteen battalions of infantry, in addition to thoſe already voted by Congreſs; to appoint officers for the ſaid battalions of infantry; to raiſe, officer, and equip 3000 light-horſe; three regiments of artillery, and a corps of engineers, and to eſtabliſh their pay; to apply to any of the ſtates for ſuch aid of the militia as he ſhall judge neceſſary, to form ſuch magazines of proviſions, and in ſuch places as he ſhall think proper; to diſplace and appoint all officers under the rank of brigadier-general, and to fill up all vacancies in every other department in the American armies; to take, wherever he may be, whatever he may want for the uſe of the army, if the inhabitants will not ſell it, allowing a reaſonable price for the ſame; to arreſt and confine perſons who refuſe to take the continental currency, or are otherwiſe diſaffected to the American cauſe; and return to the ſtates, of which they are citizens, their names, and the nature of their offences, together with the witneſſes to prove them: that the foregoing powers be veſted in General Waſhington, for and during the term of ſix months, from the date hereof, unleſs ſooner determined by Congreſs."

In this hour of extremity, the attention of Congreſs was employed in deviſing plans to ſave the ſtates from ſinking under the heavy calamities which were bearing them down. It is remarkable, that neither in the preſent condition, though trying and ſevere, nor in any other ſince

since the declaration of independence, was Congress influenced either by force, distress, artifice, or persuasion, to entertain the most distant idea of purchasing peace, by returning to the condition of British subjects. So low were they reduced in the latter end of 1776, that some members, distrustful of their ability to resist the power of Great Britain, proposed to authorise their commissioners at the court of France (whose appointment shall be hereafter explained) to transfer to that country the same monopoly of their trade which Great Britain had hitherto enjoyed. On examination it was found, that concessions of this kind would destroy the force of many arguments heretofore used in favour of independence, and probably disunite their citizens. It was next proposed to offer a monopoly of certain enumerated articles of produce.— To this the variant interests of the different states were so directly opposed, as to occasion a speedy and decided negative. Some proposed offering to France a league offensive and defensive, in case she would heartily support American independence; but this was also rejected. The more enlightened members of Congress argued, "Though the friendship of small states might be purchased, that of France could not." They alledged, that if she would risque a war with Great Britain, by openly espousing their cause, it would not be so much from the prospect of direct advantages, as from a natural desire to lessen the overgrown power of a dangerous rival. It was therefore supposed, that the only inducement, likely to influence France to an interference, was an assurance that the United States were determined to persevere in refusing a return to their former allegiance. Instead of listening to the terms of the royal commissioners, or to any founded on the idea of their resuming the character of British subjects, it was therefore again resolved, to abide by their declared independence, and proffered freedom of trade to every foreign nation, trusting the event to Providence, and risquing all consequences. Copies of these resolutions were sent to the principal courts of Europe, and proper persons were appointed to solicit their friendship to the new-formed states. These dispatches fell into the hands of the British,

1776.

1776. tiſh, and were by them publiſhed. This was the very thing wiſhed for by Congreſs; they well knew, that an apprehenſion of their making up all differences with Great Britain was the principal objection to the interference of foreign courts, in what was repreſented to be no more than a domeſtic quarrel. A reſolution adopted in the deepeſt diſtreſs and the worſt of times, that Congreſs would liſten to no terms of re-union with their Parent State, convinced thoſe who wiſhed for the diſmemberment of the Britiſh empire, that it was ſound policy to interfere, ſo far as would prevent the conqueſt of the United States.

Theſe judicious determinations in the cabinet were accompanied with vigorous exertions in the field. In this criſis of danger, 1500 of the Pennſylvania militia embodied to re-inforce the continental army. The merchant, the farmer, the tradeſman, and the labourer, cheerfully relinquiſhed the conveniencies of home, to perform the duties of private ſoldiers, in the ſeverity of a winter campaign. Though moſt of them were accuſtomed to the habits of a city life, they ſlept in tents, barns, and ſometimes in the open air, during the cold months of December and January. There were, nevertheleſs, only two inſtances of ſickneſs, and only one of death in that large body of men in the courſe of ſix weeks. The delay ſo judiciouſly contrived on the retreat through Jerſey, afforded time for theſe volunteer re-inforcements to join General Waſhington. The number of troops under his command at that time fluctuated between two and three thouſand men. To turn round and face a victorious and numerous foe, with this inconſiderable force, was riſquing much; but the urgency of the caſe required that ſomething ſhould be attempted. The recruiting buſineſs for the propoſed new continental army was at a ſtand, while the Britiſh were driving the Americans before them. The preſent regular ſoldiers could, as a matter of right, in leſs than a week claim their diſcharge, and ſcarce a ſingle recruit offered to ſupply their place. Under theſe circumſtances, the bold reſolution was formed of re-croſſing into the ſtate of Jerſey, and attacking that part of the enemy which was poſted at Trenton.

When

When the Americans retreated over the Delaware, the boats in the vicinity were removed out of the way of their pursuers, this arrested their progress: but the British commanders, in the security of conquest, cantoned their army at Burlington, Bordenton, Trenton, and other towns of New-Jersey, in daily expectation of being enabled to cross into Pennsylvania, by means of ice, which is generally formed about that time. 1776.

Of all events, none seemed to them more improbable, than that their late retreating half-naked enemies should, in this extreme cold season, face about and commence offensive operations. They indulged themselves in a degree of careless inattention to the possibility of a surprise, which in the vicinity of an enemy, however contemptible, can never be justified. It has been said that Colonel Rahl, the commanding officer in Trenton, being under some apprehension for that frontier post, applied to General Grant for a re-inforcement, and that the General returned for answer, "Tell the Colonel, he is very safe, I will undertake to keep the peace in New-Jersey with a corporal's guard."

In the evening of Christmas day, General Washington, made arrangements for re-crossing the Delaware in three divisions; at M. Konkey's Ferry, at Trenton Ferry, and at or near Bordenton. The troops which were to have crossed at the two last places, were commanded by Generals Ewing, and Cadwallader, they made every exertion to get over, but the quantity of ice was so great, that they could not effect their purpose. The main body which was commanded by General Washington crossed at M. Konkey's Ferry, but the ice in the river retarded their passage so long, that it was three o'clock in the morning before the artillery could be got over. On their landing in Jersey, they were formed into two divisions, commanded by General Sullivan and Greene, who had under their command Brigadiers Lord Sterling, Mercer, and St. Clair: one of these divisions was ordered to proceed on the lower, or River road, the other on the upper or Pennington road. Col. Stark, with some light troops, was also directed to advance near to the river, and to possess himself

1776. ſelf of that part of the town which is beyond the bridge. The diviſions having nearly the ſame diſtance to march, were ordered immediately on forcing the out-guards, to puſh directly into Trenton, that they might charge the enemy before they had time to form. Though they marched different roads, yet they arrived at the enemy's advanced poſt within three minutes of each other. The out-guards of the Heſſian troops at Trenton ſoon fell back, but kept up a conſtant retreating fire. Their main body being hard preſſed by the Americans, who had already got poſſeſſion of half their artillery, attempted to file off by a road leading towards Princeton, but were checked by a body of troops thrown in their way. Finding they were ſurrounded, they laid down their arms. The number which ſubmitted was 23 officers, and 886 men. Between 30 and 40 of the Heſſians were killed and wounded. Colonel Rahl was among the former, and ſeven of his officers among the latter. Captain Waſhington of the Virginia troops, and five or ſix of the Americans were wounded; two were killed, and two or three were frozen to death. The detachment in Trenton conſiſted of the regiments of Rahl, Loſberg, and Kniphauſen, amounting in the whole to about 1500 men, and a troop of Britiſh light horſe. All theſe were killed or captured, except about 600, who eſcaped by the road leading to Bordenton.

The Britiſh had a ſtrong battalion of light infantry at Princeton, and a force yet remaining near the Delaware, ſuperior to the American army. General Waſhington therefore, in the evening of the ſame day, thought it moſt prudent to re-croſs into Pennſylvania with his priſoners.

The effects of this ſucceſsful enterprize were ſpeedily felt in recruiting the American army. About 1400 regular ſoldiers, whoſe time of ſervice was on the point of expiring, agreed to ſerve ſix weeks longer, on a promiſed gratuity of ten paper dollars to each. Men of influence were ſent to different parts of the country to rouſe the militia. The rapine and impolitic conduct of the Britiſh operated more forcibly on the inhabitants, to expel them from

from the ſtate, than either patriotiſm or perſuaſion to prevent their overrunning it. 1776.

The Heſſian priſoners taken on the 26th being ſecured, General Waſhington re-croſſed the Delaware, and took poſſeſſion of Trenton. The detachments which had been diſtributed over New-Jerſey, previous to the capture of the Heſſians, immediately after that event aſſembled at Princeton, and were joined by the army from Brunſwick under Lord Cornwallis. From this poſition they came forwards towards Trenton in great force, hoping by a vigorous onſet to repair the injury their cauſe had ſuſtained by the late defeat. Truly delicate was the ſituation of the feeble American army. To retreat was to hazard the city of Philadelphia, and to deſtroy every ray of hope which had begun to dawn from their late ſucceſs. To riſque an action with a ſuperior force in front, and a river in rear, was dangerous in the extreme. To get round the advanced party of the Britiſh, and by puſhing forwards to attack in their rear, was deemed preferable to either. The Britiſh on their advance from Princeton, about 4 P. M. attacked a body of Americans which were poſted, with four field pieces, a little to the northward of Trenton, and compelled them to retreat. The purſuing Britiſh, being checked at the bridge over Sanpink Creek, which runs through that town, by ſome field pieces which were poſted on the oppoſite banks of that rivulet, fell back ſo far as to be out of reach of the cannon, and kindled their fires. The Americans were drawn up on the other ſide of the creek, and in that poſition remained till night, cannonading the enemy and receiving their fire. In this critical hour two armies, on which the ſucceſs or failure of the American revolution materially depended, were crowded into the ſmall village of Trenton, and only ſeparated by a creek in many places fordable. The Britiſh believing they had all the advantages they could wiſh for, and that they could uſe them when they pleaſed, diſcontinued all farther operations, and kept themſelves in readineſs to make the attack next morning. Sir William Erſkine is reported to have adviſed an immediate attack, or at leaſt to place a ſtrong guard

Dec. 28.

1777. Jan. 2.

Jan. 2.

1777. guard at a bridge over Sanpink Creek, which lay in the route the Americans took to Princeton, giving for reason, that otherwise, Washington, if a good general, would make a move to the left of the royal army, and attack the post at Princeton in their rear. The next morning presented a scene as brilliant on the one side, as it was unexpected on the other. Soon after it became dark, General Washington ordered all his baggage to be silently removed, and having left guards for the purpose of deception, marched with his whole force, by a circuitous route, to Princeton. This manoeuvre was determined upon in a council of war, from a conviction that it would avoid the appearance of a retreat, and at the same time the hazard of an action in a bad position, and that it was the most likely way to preserve the city of Philadelphia from falling into the hands of the British. General Washington also presumed, that from an eagerness to efface the impressions made by the late capture of the Hessians at Trenton, the British commanders had pushed forward their principal force, and that of course the remainder in the rear at Princeton was not more than equal to his own. The event verified this conjecture. The more effectually to disguise the departure of the Americans from Trenton, fires were lighted up in front of their camp. These not only gave an appearance of going to rest, but as flame cannot be seen through, concealed from the British what was transacting behind them. In this relative position they were a pillar of fire to the one army, and a pillar of a cloud to the other. Providence favoured this movement of the Americans. The weather had been for some time so warm and moist, that the ground was soft and the roads so deep as to be scarcely passable: but the wind suddenly changed to the north-west, and the ground in a short time was frozen so hard, that when the Americans took up their line of march, they were no more retarded than if they had been upon a solid pavement.

Jan. 3. General Washington reached Princeton early in the morning, and would have completely surprised the British, had not a party, which was on their way to Trenton, descried

descried his troops, when they were about two miles distant, and sent back couriers to alarm their unsuspecting fellow-soldiers in their rear. These consisted of the 17th, the 40th, and 65th regiments of British infantry and some of the royal artillery with two field pieces, and three troops of light dragoons. The center of the Americans, consisting of the Philadelphia militia, while on their line of march, was briskly charged by a party of the British, and gave way in disorder. The moment was critical: General Washington pushed forward, and placed himself between his own men and the British, with his horse's head fronting the latter. The Americans, encouraged by his example and exhortations, made a stand, and returned the British fire. The General, though between both parties, was providentially uninjured by either. A party of the British fled into the college and were there attacked with field pieces which were fired into it. The seat of the muses became for some time the scene of action. The party which had taken refuge in the college, after receiving a few discharges from the American field pieces, came out and surrendered themselves prisoners of war. In the course of the engagement, sixty of the British were killed, and a greater number wounded, and about 300 of them were taken prisoners. The rest made their escape, some by pushing on towards Trenton, others by returning towards Brunswick. The Americans lost only a few, but Colonels Hasset and Potter, and Captain Neal of the artillery were among the slain. General Mercer received three bayonet wounds, of which he died in a short time. He was a Scotchman by birth, but from principle and affection had engaged to support the liberties of his adopted country, with a zeal equal to that of any of its native sons. In private life he was amiable, and his character as an officer stood high in the public esteem.

1777.

While they were fighting in Princeton, the British in Trent n were under arms, and on the point of making an assault on the evacuated camp of the Americans. With so much address had the movement to Princeton been conducted, that though from the critical situation of the two armies, every ear may be supposed to have been open

1777. open, and every watchfulneſs to have been employed, yet General Waſhington moved completely off the ground with his whole force, ſtores, baggage, and artillery, unknown to, and unſuſpected by his adverſaries. The Britiſh in Trenton were ſo entirely deceived, that when they heard the report of the artillery at Princeton, though it was in the depth of winter, they ſuppoſed it to be thunder.

That part of the royal army, which having eſcaped from Princeton, retreated towards New-Brunſwick, was purſued for three or four miles. Another party which had advanced as far as Maidenhead, on their way to Trenton, hearing the frequent diſcharge of fire-arms in their rear, wheeled round and marched to the aid of their companions. The Americans by deſtroying bridges, retarded theſe, though cloſe in their rear, ſo long as to gain time for themſelves to move off, in good order, to Pluckemin.

So great was the conſternation of the Britiſh at theſe unexpected movements, that they inſtantly evacuated both Trenton and Princeton, and retreated with their whole force to New-Brunſwick. The American militia collected and forming themſelves into parties, waylaid their enemies, and cut them off whenſoever an opportunity preſented. In a few days they overran the Jerſeys. General Maxwell ſurpriſed Elizabeth-Town, and took near 100 priſoners. Newark was abandoned, and the late conquerors were forced to leave Woodbridge. The royal troops were confined to Amboy and Brunſwick, which held a water communication with New-York. Thus, in the ſhort ſpace of a month, that part of Jerſey, which lies between New-Brunſwick and Delaware, was both overrun by the Britiſh, and recovered by the Americans. The retreat of the continental army, the timid policy of the Jerſey farmers, who choſe rather to ſecure their property by ſubmiſſion, than defend it by reſiſtance, made the Britiſh believe their work was done, and that little elſe remained, but to reap a harveſt of plunder as the reward of their labours. Unreſtrained by the terrors of civil law, uncontrouled by the ſeverity of diſcipline, and elated with their ſucceſs, the ſoldiers of the royal army, and particularly

ticularly the Hessians, gave full scope to the selfish and ferocious passions of human nature. A conquered country, and submitting inhabitants presented easy plunder, equal to their unbounded rapacity. Infants, children, old men and women, were stripped of their blankets and cloathing. Furniture was burnt or otherwise destroyed. Domestic animals were carried off, and the people robbed of their necessary houshold provisions. The rapes and brutalities committed on women, and even on very young girls, would shock the ears of modesty, if particularly recited. These violences were perpetrated on inhabitants who had remained in their houses and received printed protections, signed by order of the commander in chief. It was in vain that they produced these protections as a safeguard. The Hessians could not read them, and the British soldiers thought they were entitled to a share of the booty, equally with their foreign associates. 1777.

Such, in all ages, has been the complection of the bulk of armies, that immediate and severe punishments are indispensably necessary to keep them from flagrant enormities. That discipline, without which an army is a band of armed plunderers, was as far, as respected the inhabitants, either neglected, or but feebly administered in the royal army. The soldiers finding they might take with impunity what they pleased, were more strongly urged by avarice, than checked by policy or fear. Had every citizen been secured in his rights, protected in his property, and paid for his supplies, the consequences might have been fatal to the hopes of those who were attached to independence. What the warm recommendations of Congress, and the ardent supplications of General Washington could not effect, took place of its own accord, in consequence of the plunderings and devastations of the royal army.

The whole country became instantly hostile to the invaders. Sufferers of all parties rose as one man to revenge their personal injuries. Those, who from age or infirmities were incapable of bearing arms, kept a strict watch on the movements of the royal army, and from time to time communicated information to their countrymen in

1777. in arms. Thoſe who lately declined all military oppoſition, though called upon by the ſacred tie of honour, pledged to each other on the declaration of independence, cheerfully embodied, when they found ſubmiſſion to be unavailing for the ſecurity of their eſtates. This was not done originally in conſequence of the victories of Trenton and Princeton; in the very moment of theſe actions, or before the news of them had circulated, ſundry individuals, unknowing of General Waſhington's movements, were concerting private inſurrections, to revenge themſelves on the plunderers. The diſpute originated about property, or in other words, about the right of taxation. From the ſame ſource at this time, it received a new and forcible impulſe. The farmer, who could not trace the conſequences of Britiſh taxation, nor of American independence, felt the injuries he ſuſtained from the depredation of licentious troops. The militia of New-Jerſey, who had hitherto behaved moſt ſhamefully, from this time forward redeemed their character, and throughout a tedious war performed ſervices with a ſpirit and diſcipline, in many reſpects, equal to that of regular ſoldiers.

The victories of Trenton and Princeton ſeemed to be like a reſurrection from the dead to the deſponding friends of independence. A melancholy gloom had in the firſt 25 days of December overſpread the United States; but from the memorable æra of the 26th of the ſame month, their proſpects began to brighten. The recruiting ſervice, which for ſome time had been at a ſtand, was ſucceſsfully renewed, and hopes were ſoon indulged, that the commander in chief would be enabled to take the field in the ſpring, with a permanent regular force. General Waſhington retired to Morriſtown, that he might afford ſhelter to his ſuffering army. The American militia had ſundry ſucceſsful ſkirmiſhes with detachments of their adverſaries. Within four days after the affair at Princeton, between forty and fifty Waldeckers were killed, wounded, or taken at Springfield, by an equal number of the ſame New-Jerſey militia, which but a month before ſuffered the Britiſh to overrun their country

try without opposition. This enterprise was conducted by Colonel Spencer, whose gallantry, on the occasion, was rewarded with the command of a regiment. 1777.

During the winter movements, which have been just related, the soldiers of both armies underwent great hardships, but the Americans suffered by far the greater. Many of them were without shoes, though marching over frozen ground, which so gashed their naked feet, that each step was marked with blood: there was scarcely a tent in their whole army: the city of Philadelphia had been twice laid under contribution to provide them with blankets: officers had been appointed to examine every house, and, after leaving a scanty covering for the family to bring off the rest for the use of the troops in the field; but notwithstanding these exertions, the quantity procured was far short of decency, much less of comfort.

The officers and soldiers of the American army were about this time inoculated in their cantonment at Morristown; as very few of them had ever had the small pox, the inoculation was nearly universal. The disorder had previously spread among them in the natural way, and proved mortal to many! but after inoculation was introduced, though whole regiments were inoculated in a day, there was little or no mortality from the small pox, and the disorder was so slight, that from the beginning to the end of it, there was not a single day in which they could not, and if called upon, would not have turned out and fought the British. To induce the inhabitants to accommodate officers and soldiers in their houses, while under the small pox, they and their families were inoculated gratis by the military surgeons. Thus in a short time, the whole army and the inhabitants in and near Morristown were subjected to the small pox, and with very little inconvenience to either.

Three months, which followed the actions of Trenton and Princeton, passed away without any important military enterprise on either side. Major-general Putnam was directed to take post at Princeton, and cover the country in the vicinity. He had only a few hundred troops, though he was no more than eighteen miles distant from the

1777. the strong garrison of the British at Brunswick. At one period he had fewer men for duty than he had miles of frontier to guard. The situation of General Washington at Morristown was not more eligible. His force was trifling, when compared with that of the British; but the enemy and his own countrymen believed the contrary. Their deception was cherished, and artfully continued by the specious parade of a considerable army. The American officers took their stations in positions of difficult access, and kept up a constant communication with each other. This secured them from insult and surprise. While they covered the country, they harrassed the foraging parties of the British, and often attacked them with success. Of a variety of these, the two following are selected as most worthy of notice: General Dickenson, with 400 Jersey militia, and fifty of the Pennsylvania rifle men, Jan. 20. crossed Millstone-River, near Somerset Court-house, and attacked a large foraging party of the British with so much spirit, that they abandoned their convoy and fled. Nine of them were taken prisoners. Forty waggons, and upwards of one hundred horses, with a considerable booty, fell into the hands of the General. While the British were loading their waggons, a single man began to fire on them from the woods. He was soon joined by more of his neighbours, who could not patiently see their property carried away. After the foragers had been annoyed for some time by these unseen marksmen, they fancied on the appearance of General Dickinson, that they were attacked by a superior force, and began a precipitate flight.

Feb. 18. In about a month after the affair of Somerset Court-house, Colonel Nelson, of Brunswick, with a detachment of 150 militia men, surprised and captured at Lawrence's Neck, a major, and fifty-nine privates of the refugees, who were in British pay.

Throughout the campaign of 1776, an uncommon degree of sickness raged in the American army. Husbandmen, transferred at once from the conveniences of domestic life, to the hardships of a field encampment, could not accommodate themselves to the sudden change. The southern troops sickened from the want

want of ſalt proviſions. Linen ſhirts were too generally worn in contact with the ſkin. The ſalutary influence of flannel, in preventing the diſeaſes of camps, was either unknown or diſregarded. The diſcipline of the army was too feeble to enforce thoſe regulations which experience has proved to be indiſpenſably neceſſary for preſerving the health of large bodies of men collected together: cleanlineſs was alſo too much neglected. On the 8th of Auguſt, the whole American army before New-York conſiſted of 17,225 men, but of that number only 10,514 were fit for duty. Theſe numerous ſick ſuffered much from the want of neceſſaries; hurry and confuſion added much to their diſtreſſes: there was beſides a real want of the requiſites for their relief. 1777.

A proper hoſpital eſtabliſhment was beyond the abilities of Congreſs, eſpecially as the previous arrangements were not entered upon till the campaign had begun. Many, perhaps ſome thouſands in the American army, were ſwept off in a few months by ſickneſs. The country every where preſented the melancholy ſight of ſoldiers ſuffering poverty and diſeaſe, without the aid of medicine or attendance. Thoſe who ſurvived gave ſuch accounts of the ſufferings of the ſick, as greatly diſcouraged the recruiting ſervice. A rage for plundering, under the pretence of taking Tory property, infected many of the common ſoldiery, and even ſome of the officers. The army had been formed on ſuch principles, in ſome of the ſtates, that commiſſions were, in ſeveral inſtances, beſtowed on perſons who had no pretenſions to the character of gentlemen. Several of the officers were choſen by their own men, who often preferred thoſe from whom they expected the greateſt indulgencies. In other caſes, the choice of the men was in favour of thoſe who had conſented to throw their pay into a joint ſtock with the privates, from which officers and men drew equal ſhares.

The army, conſiſting moſtly of new recruits and unexperienced officers, and being only engaged for a twelvemonth, was very deficient in that mechaniſm and diſcipline which time and experience beſtow on veteran troops. General Waſhington was unremitting in his repreſen-

1777. representations to Congress, favouring such alterations as promised permanency, order, and discipline in the army; but his judicious opinions on these subjects were slowly adopted. The sentiments of liberty, which then generally prevailed, made some distinguished members of Congress so distrustful of the future power and probable designs of a permanent domestic army, that they had well nigh sacrificed their country to their jealousies.

The unbounded freedom of the savage who roams the woods, must be restrained when he becomes a citizen of orderly government, and from the necessity of the case must be much more so, when he submits to be a soldier. The individuals composing the army of America could not at once pass over from the full enjoyment of civil liberty to the discipline of a camp, nor could the leading men in Congress for some time be persuaded to adopt energetic establishments. "God forbid, would such say, that the citizen should be so far lost in the soldiers of our army, that they should give over longing for the enjoyments of domestic happiness. Let frequent furloughs be granted, rather than the endearments of wives and children should cease to allure the individuals of our army from camps to farms." The amiableness of this principle veiled the error of the sentiment. The minds of the civil leaders in the councils of America were daily occupied in contemplating the rights of human nature, and investigating arguments on the principles of general liberty, to justify their own opposition to Great Britain. Warmed with these ideas, they trusted too much to the virtue of their countrymen, and were backward to enforce that subordination and order in their army, which, though it intrenches on civil liberty, produces effects in the military line unequalled by the effusions of patriotism, or the exertions of undisciplined valour.

The experience of two campaigns evinced the folly of trusting the defence of the country to militia, or to levies raised only for a few months, and had induced a resolution for recruiting an army for the war. The good effects of this measure will appear in the sequel.

The

The campaign of 1776 did not end till it had been protracted into the first month of the year 1777. The British had counted on the complete and speedy reduction of their late Colonies, but they found the work more difficult of execution than was supposed. They wholly failed in their designs on the southern states. In Canada they recovered what in the preceding year they had lost—drove the Americans out of their borders, and destroyed their fleet on the lakes, but they failed in making their intended impression on the north-western frontier of the states. They obtained possession of Rhode-Island, but the acquisition was of little service, perhaps was of detriment. For near three years several thousand men stationed thereon for its security, were lost to every purpose of active co-operation with the royal forces in the field, and the possession of it secured no equivalent advantages. The British completely succeeded against the city of New-York and the adjacent country, but when they pursued their victories into New-Jersey, and subdivided their army, the recoiling Americans soon recovered the greatest part of what they had lost. 1777.

Sir William Howe, after having nearly reached Philadelphia, was confined to limits so narrow, that the fee simple of all he commanded would not re-imburse the expence incurred by its conquest.

The war, on the part of the Americans, was but barely begun. Hitherto they had engaged with temporary forces for a redress of grievances, but towards the close of this year they made arrangements for raising a permanent army to contend with Great Britain for the sovereignty of the country. To have thus far stood their ground with their new levies, was a matter of great importance, because to them delay was victory, and not to be conquered was to conquer.

CHAP.

CHA[illegible] II.

Of Independence, State Co[illegible], and the Confederati[illegible]

1777. IN former ages it was common for a part of a community to migrate, and erect themſelves into an independent ſociety. Since the earth has been more fully peopled, and eſpecially ſince the principles of Union have been better underſtood, a different policy has prevailed. A fondneſs for planting Colonies has, for three preceding centuries, given full ſcope to a diſpoſition for emigration, and at the ſame time the emigrants have been retained in a connection with their parent ſtate. By theſe means Europeans have made the riches both of the eaſt and the weſt ſubſervient to their avarice and ambition. Though they occupy the ſmalleſt portion of the four quarters of the globe, they have contrived to ſubject the other three to their influence or command.

The circumſtances under which New-England was planted, would a few centuries ago have entitled them, from their firſt ſettlement, to the privileges of independence. They were virtually exiled from their native country by being denied the rights of men—they ſet out on their own expence, and after purchaſing the conſent of the native proprietors, improved an uncultivated country, to which, in the eye of reaſon and philoſophy, the King of England had no title.

If it is lawful for individuals to relinquiſh their native ſoil, and purſue their own happineſs in other regions and under other political aſſociations, the ſettlers of New-England were always ſo far independent, as to owe no obedience to their Parent State, but ſuch as reſulted from their voluntary aſſent. The ſlaviſh doctrine of the divine right of kings, and the corruptions of Chriſtianity, by undervaluing heathen titles to property in the ſoil, favoured an oppoſite ſyſtem. What for ſeveral centuries after the Chriſtrian æra would have been called the inſtitution of a new government, was by modern refinement denominated only an extenſion of the old, in the form of a dependent Colony. Though the prevailing eccleſiaſtical and political creeds tended

tended to degrade [illegible] on of the new ſettlers in England, yet there [illegible] a party there which believed in their natural right [illegible] independence. They recurred to firſt principles, and argued, that as they received from government nothing more than a charter, founded on ideal claims of ſovereignty, they owed it no other obedience than what was derived from expreſs or implied compact. It was not till the preſent century had more than half elapſed, that it occurred to any number of the Coloniſts, that they had an intereſt in being detached from Great Britain. Their attention was firſt turned to this ſubject by the Britiſh claim of taxation; this opened a melancholy proſpect, boundleſs in extent, and endleſs in duration. The Boſton port act, and the other acts, paſſed in 1774, and 1775, which have been already the ſubject of comment, progreſſively weakened the attachment of the Coloniſts on the birth place of their forefathers. The commencement of hoſtilities on the 19th of April, 1775, exhibited the Parent State in an odious point of view, and abated the original dread of ſeparating from it. But nevertheleſs at that time, and for a twelve month after, a majority of the Coloniſts wiſhed for no more than to be re-eſtabliſhed as ſubjects in their ancient rights. Had independence been their object even at the commencent of hoſtilities, they would have reſcinded theſe aſſociations which have been already mentioned, and imported goods more largely than ever. Common ſenſe revolts at the idea, that Coloniſts, unfurniſhed with military ſtores, and wanting manufacturers of every kind, ſhould at the time of their intending a ſerious ſtruggle for independence, by a voluntary agreement, deprive themſelves of the obvious means of procuring ſuch foreign ſupplies as their circumſtances might make neceſſary. Inſtead of purſuing a line of conduct which might have been dictated by a wiſh for independence, they continued their exports for nearly a year after they ceaſed to import. This not only leſſened the debts they owed to Great Britain, but furniſhed additional means for carrying on the war againſt themſelves. To aim at independence, and at the ſame time to transfer their reſources to their enemies, could not have been the

1777. the policy of an enlightened people. It was not till ſome time in 1776, that the Colonies began to take other ground, and contend that it was for their intereſt to be for ever ſeparated from Great Britain. In favour of this opinion it was ſaid, that in caſe of their continuing ſubjects, the Mother Country, though ſhe redreſſed their preſent grievances, might at pleaſure repeal ſimilar oppreſſions; and that ſhe ought not to be truſted, having twice reſumed the exerciſe of taxation, after it had been apparently relinquiſhed. The favourers of ſeparation alſo urged, that Great Britain was jealous of their increaſing numbers and riſing greatneſs—that ſhe would not exerciſe government for their benefit, but for her own. That the only permanent ſecurity for American happineſs was, to deny her the power of interfering with their government or commerce. To effect this purpoſe they were of opinion, that it was neceſſary to cut the knot which connected the two countries, by a public renunciation of all political connections between them.

The Americans about this time began to be influenced by new views. The military arrangements of the preceding year—their unexpected union, and prevailing enthuſiaſm, expanded the minds of their leaders, and elevated the ſentiments of the great body of their people. Deciſive meaſures which would have been lately reprobated, now met with approbation.

The favourers of ſubordination under the former conſtitution, urged the advantages of a ſupreme head, to controul the diſputes of interfering colonies, and alſo the benefits which flowed from union; and that independence was untried ground, and ſhould not be entered upon but in the laſt extremity.

They flattered themſelves that Great Britain was ſo fully convinced of the determined ſpirit of America, that if the preſent controverſy was compromiſed, ſhe would not at any future period reſume an injurious exerciſe of her ſupremacy. They were therefore for proceeding no farther than to defend themſelves in the character of ſubjects, truſting that ere long the preſent hoſtile meaſures would be relinquiſhed, and the harmony

of

of the two countries re-eſtabliſhed. The favourers of 1777.
this ſyſtem were embarraſſed; and all their arguments weakened by the perſeverance of Great Britain in her ſchemes of coercion. A probable hope of a ſpeedy repeal of a few acts of Parliament would have greatly increaſed the number of thoſe who were advocates for reconcilation. But the certainty of intelligence to the contrary gave additional force to the arguments of the oppoſite party. Though new weight was daily thrown into the ſcale, in which the advantages of independence were weighed, yet it did not preponderate 'till about that time in 1776, when intelligence reached the Coloniſts of the act of Parliament paſſed in December 1775, for throwing them out of Britiſh protection, and of hiring foreign troops to aſſiſt in effecting their conqueſt. Reſpecting the firſt it was ſaid, "that protection and allegiance were reciprocal, and that the refuſal of the firſt was a legal ground of juſtification for withholding the laſt." They conſidered themſelves to be thereby diſcharged from their allegiance, and that to declare themſelves independent was no more, than to announce to the world the real political ſtate in which Great Britain had placed them. This act proved that the Coloniſts might conſtitutionally declare themſelves independent, but the hiring of foreign troops to make war upon them, demonſtrated the neceſſity of their doing it immediately. They reaſoned that if Great Britain called in the aid of ſtrangers to cruſh them, they muſt ſeek ſimilar relief for their own preſervation. But they well knew this could not be expected, while they were in arms againſt their acknowledged Sovereign. They had therefore only a choice of difficulties, and muſt either ſeek foreign aid as independent ſtates, or continue in the aukward and hazardous ſituation of ſubjects, carrying on war from their own reſources, both againſt the King, and ſuch mercenaries as he choſe to employ for their ſubjugation. Neceſſity, not choice, forced them on the deciſion. Submiſſion, without obtaining a redreſs of their grievances, was advocated by none who poſſeſſed the public confidence. Some of the popular leaders may have ſecretly wiſhed for inde-

1777. independence from the beginning of the controversy, but their number was small and their sentiments were not generally known.

While the public mind was balancing on this eventful subject, several writers placed the advantages of independence in various points of view. Among these Thomas Paine in a pamphlet, under the signature of Common Sense, held the most distinguished rank. The stile, manner, and language of this performance were calculated to interest the passions, and to rouse all the active powers of human nature. With a view of operating on the sentiments of a religious people, Scripture was pressed into his service, and the powers, and even the name of a king was rendered odious in the eyes of the numerous Colonists who had read and studied the history of the Jews, as recorded in the Old Testament. The folly of that people in revolting from a government, instituted by Heaven itself, and the oppressions to which they were subjected in consequence of their lusting after kings to rule over them, afforded an excellent handle for prepossessing the Colonists in favour of republican institutions, and prejudicing them against kingly government. Hereditary succession was turned into ridicule. The absurdity of subjecting a great continent to a small island on the other side of the globe, was represented in such striking language, as to interest the honour and pride of the Colonists in renouncing the government of Great Britain. The necessity, the advantage, and practicability of independence were forcibly demonstrated. Nothing could be better timed than this performance; it was addressed to freemen, who had just received convincing proof, that Great Britain had thrown them out of her protection, had engaged foreign mercenaries to make war upon them, and seriously designed to compel their unconditional submission to her unlimited power. It found the Colonists most thoroughly alarmed for their liberties, and disposed to do and suffer any thing that promised their establishment. In union with the feelings and sentiments of the people, it produced surprising effects. Many thousands were convinced, and were led to approve

prove and long for a separation from the Mother Country. 1777.
Though that measure, a few months before, was not only foreign from their wishes, but the object of their abhorrence, the current suddenly became so strong in its favour, that it bore down all opposition. The multitude was hurried down the stream, but some worthy men could not easily reconcile themselves to the idea of an eternal separation from a country to which they had been long bound by the most endearing ties. They saw the sword drawn, but could not tell when it would be sheathed; they feared that the dispersed individuals of the several Colonies would not be brought to coalesce under an efficient government, and that after much anarchy, some future Cæsar would grasp their liberties, and confirm himself in a throne of despotism. They doubted the perseverance of their countrymen in effecting their independence, and were also apprehensive that in case of success, their future condition would be less happy than their past. Some respectable individuals whose principles were pure, but whose souls were not of that firm texture which revolutions require, shrunk back from the bold measures proposed by their more adventurous countrymen. To submit without an appeal to Heaven, though secretly wished for by some, was not the avowed sentiment of any; but to persevere in petitioning and resisting, was the system of some misguided honest men. The favourers of this opinion were generally wanting in that decision which grasps at great objects, and influenced by that timid policy which does its work by halves. Most of them dreaded the power of Britain. A few, on the score of interest, or an expectancy of favours from royal government, refused to concur with the general voice. Some of the natives of the Parent State, who having lately settled in the Colonies, had not yet exchanged European for American ideas, together with a few others, conscientiously opposed the measures of Congress: but the great bulk of the people, and especially of the spirited and independent part of the community, came with surprising unanimity into the project of independence.

The

1776. The eagerneſs for independence reſulted more from feeling than reaſoning. The advantages of an unfettered trade, the proſpect of honours and emoluments in adminiſtering a new government, were of themſelves inſufficient motives for adopting this bold meaſure. But what was wanting from conſiderations of this kind, was made up by the perſeverance of Great Britain in her ſchemes of coercion and conqueſt. The determined reſolution of the Mother Country to ſubdue the Coloniſts, together with the plans ſhe adopted for accompliſhing that purpoſe, and their equally determined reſolution to appeal to Heaven rather than ſubmit, made a declaration of independence as neceſſary in 1776, as was the non-importation agreement of 1774, or the aſſumption of arms in 1775. The laſt naturally reſulted from the firſt. The revolution was not forced on the people by ambitious leaders graſping at ſupreme power, but every meaſure of it was forced on Congreſs, by the neceſſity of the caſe and the voice of the people. The change of the public mind of America reſpecting connection with Great Britain is without a parallel. In the ſhort ſpace of two years, nearly three millions of people paſſed over from the love and duty of loyal ſubjects, to the hatred and reſentment of enemies.

June 7. The motion for declaring the Colonies free and independent was firſt made in Congreſs by Richard Henry Lee, of Virginia; he was warranted in making this motion by the particular inſtructions of his immediate conſtituents, and alſo by the general voice of the people of all the ſtates. When the time for taking the ſubject under conſideration arrived, much knowledge, ingenuity, and eloquence were diſplayed on both ſides of the queſtion. The debates were continued for ſome time, and with great animation. In theſe John Adams, and John Dickinſon, took leading and oppoſite parts. The former began one of his ſpeeches by an invocation of the god of eloquence, to aſſiſt him in defending the claims, and in enforcing the duty of his countrymen. He ſtrongly urged the immediate diſſolution of all political connection of the Colonies with Great Britain, from the voice of the people,

people, from the neceſſity of the meaſure in order to obtain foreign aſſiſtance, from a regard to conſiſtency, and from the proſpects of glory and happineſs, which opened beyond the war, to a free and independent people. Mr. Dickinſon replied to this ſpeech. He began by obſerving, that the member from Maſſachuſetts (Mr. Adams) had introduced his defence of the declaration of independence, by invoking an heathen god, but that he ſhould begin his objections to it by ſolemnly invoking the Governor of the Univerſe, ſo to influence the minds of the members of Congreſs, that if the propoſed meaſure was for the benefit of America, nothing which he ſhould ſay againſt it might make the leaſt impreſſion. He then urged that the preſent time was improper for the declaration of independence, that the war might be conducted with equal vigour without it, that it would divide the Americans, and unite the people of Great Britain againſt them. He then propoſed that ſome aſſurance ſhould be obtained of aſſiſtance from a foreign power, before they renounced their connection with Great Britain, and that the declaration of independence ſhould be the condition to be offered for this aſſiſtance. He likewiſe ſtated the diſputes that exiſted between ſeveral of the Colonies, and propoſed that ſome meaſures for the ſettlement of them ſhould be determined upon, before they loſt ſight of that tribunal which had hitherto been the umpire of all their differences. 1776.

After a full diſcuſſion, the meaſure of declaring the Colonies free and independent was approved, by nearly an unanimous vote. The anniverſary of the day on which this great event took place, has ever ſince been conſecrated by the Americans to religious gratitude and ſocial pleaſures; it is conſidered by them as the birth-day of their freedom.

The act of the United Colonies for ſeparating themſelves from the government of Great Britain, and declaring their independence, was expreſſed in the following words:

"When, in the courſe of human events, it becomes neceſſary for one people to diſſolve the political bands which

1776. which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its power in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security. Such has been the patient sufferance of these Colonies, and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former systems of government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over these states. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world.

He has refused his assent to laws the most wholesome and necessary for the public good.

He has forbidden his governors to pass laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation

operation till his assent should be obtained; and when so suspended he has utterly neglected to attend to them. 1776.

He has refused to pass other laws for the accommodation of large districts of people, unless those people would relinquish the right of representation in the legislature, a right inestimable to them, and formidable to tyrants only.

He has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their public records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into compliance with his measures.

He has dissolved representative houses repeatedly, for opposing, with manly firmness, his invasions on the rights of the people.

He has refused, for a long time after such dissolutions, to cause others to be elected; whereby the legislative powers, incapable of annihilation, have returned to the people at large for their exercise; the state remaining in the mean time exposed to all the danger of invasion from without, and convulsions within.

He has endeavoured to prevent the population of these states, for that purpose obstructing the laws for naturalization of foreigners; refusing to pass others to encourage their migration hither, and raising the conditions of new appropriations of lands.

He has obstructed the administration of justice, by refusing his assent to laws for establishing judiciary powers.

He has made judges dependent on his will alone, for the tenure of their offices, and the amount and payment of their salaries.

He has erected a multitude of new offices, and sent hither swarms of officers to harass our people and eat out their substance.

He has kept among us, in time of peace, standing armies, without the consent of our legislatures.

He has affected to render the military independent of, and superior to, the civil power.

He has combined with others to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitution, and unacknowledged by our laws; giving his assent to their acts of pretended legislation:——

1776. For quartering large bodies of armed troops among us:

For protecting them, by a mock trial, from punishment for any murders which they ſhould commit on the inhabitants of theſe ſtates:

For cutting off our trade with all parts of the world:

For impoſing taxes on us without our conſent:

For depriving us, in many caſes, of the benefits of trial by jury:

For tranſporting us beyond the ſeas to be tried for pretended offences:

For aboliſhing the free ſyſtem of Engliſh laws in a neighbouring province, eſtabliſhing therein an arbitrary government, and enlarging its boundaries, ſo as to render it at once an example and fit inſtrument for introducing the ſame abſolute rule into theſe Colonies:

For taking away our charters, aboliſhing our moſt valuable laws, and altering fundamentally the form of our governments:

For ſuſpending our own legiſlatures, and declaring themſelves inveſted with power to legiſlate for us in all caſes whatſoever.

He has abdicated government here, by declaring us out of his protection, and waging war againſt us.

He has plundered our ſeas, ravaged our coaſts, burnt our towns, and deſtroyed the lives of our people.

He is, at this time, tranſporting large armies of foreign mercenaries to complete the works of death, deſolation and tyranny already begun with circumſtances of cruelty and perfidy, ſcarcely paralleled to the moſt barbarous ages, and totally unworthy the head of a civilized nation.

He has conſtrained our fellow-citizens, taken captive on the high ſeas, to bear arms againſt their country, to become the executioners of their friends and brethren, or to fall themſelves by their hands.

He has excited domeſtic inſurrections among us, and has endeavoured to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers the mercileſs Indian ſavages, whoſe known rule of warfare is an undiſtinguiſhed deſtruction of all ages, ſexes, and conditions.

In every ſtage of theſe oppreſſions we have petitioned

for

for redreſs in the moſt humble terms: our repeated petitions have been anſwered only by repeated injury. A prince, whoſe character is thus marked by every act which may define a tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people. 1776.

Nor have we been wanting in attention to our Britiſh brethren. We have warned them from time to time of attempts made by their legiſlature, to extend an unwarrantable juriſdiction over us. We have reminded them of the circumſtances of our emigration and ſettlement here. We have appealed to their native juſtice and magnanimity, and we have conjured them, by the ties of our common kindred, to diſavow theſe uſurpations, which would inevitably interrupt our connections and correſpondence. They too have been deaf to the voice of juſtice and of conſanguinity. We muſt, therefore, acquieſce in the neceſſity, which denounces our ſeparation, and hold them as we hold the reſt of mankind, enemies in war, in peace, friends.

We, therefore, the repreſentatives of the United States of America, in General Congreſs aſſembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do in the name, and by authority of the good people of theſe Colonies, ſolemnly publiſh and declare, that theſe United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, FREE and INDEPENDENT STATES; that they are abſolved from all allegiance to the Britiſh Crown; and that all political connection between them and the ſtate of Great Britain is and ought to be totally diſſolved; and that as free and independent ſtates, they have full power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, eſtabliſh commerce, and to do all other acts and things which independent ſtates may of right do. And for the ſupport of this declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our ſacred honour.

JOHN HANCOCK, Preſident.

New-Hampſhire, Joſiah Bartlett, William Whipple, Matthew Thornton. *Maſſachuſetts-Bay*, Samuel Adams, John Adams, Robert-Treat Paine, El-

1776. bridge Gerry. *Rhode-Island, &c.* Stephen Hopkins, William Ellery. *Connecticut,* Roger Sherman, Samuel Huntington, William Williams, Oliver Wolcott. *New-York,* William Floyd, Philip Livingston, Francis Lewis, Lewis Morris, *New-Jersey,* Richard Stockton, John Witherspoon, Francis Hopkinson, John Hart, Abraham Clark. *Pennsylvania,* Robert Morris, Benjamin Rush, Benjamin Franklin, John Morton, George Clymer, James Smith, George Taylor, James Wilson, George Ross. *Delaware,* Cæsar Rodney, George Read. *Maryland,* Samuel Chase, William Paca, Thomas Stone, Charles Carroll, of Carrollton. *Virginia,* George Wythe, Richard Henry Lee, Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Harrison, Thomas Nelson, Jun. Francis Lightfoot Lee, Carter Braxton. *North-Carolina,* William Hooper, Joseph Hewes, John Penn. *South-Carolina,* Edward Rutledge, Thomas Heyward, Jun. Thomas Lynch, Jun. Arthur Middleton. *Georgia,* Button Gwinnet, Lyman Hall, George Walton."

From the promulgation of this declaration, every thing assumed a new form. The Americans no longer appeared in the character of subjects in arms against their sovereign, but as an independent people, repelling the attacks of an invading foe. The propositions and supplications for reconciliation were done away. The dispute was brought to a single point, whether the late British Colonies should be conquered provinces, or free and independent states.

The declaration of independence was read publicly in all the states, and was welcomed with many demonstrations of joy. The people were encouraged by it to bear up under the calamities of war, and viewed the evils they suffered, only as the thorn that ever accompanies the rose. The army received it with particular satisfaction; as far as it had validity, so far it secured them from suffering as rebels, and held out to their view an object, the attainment of which would be an adequate recompence for the toils

fings toils and dangers of war. They were animated by the confideration that they were no longer to rifque their lives for the trifling purpofe of procuring a repeal of a few oppreffive acts of Parliament, but for a new organization of government, that would for ever put it out of the power of Great Britain to oppress them. The flattering profpects of an extenfive commerce, freed from Britifh reftrictions, and the honours and emoluments of office in independent ftates, now began to glitter before the eyes of the Colonifts, and reconciled them to the difficulties of their fituation. What was fuppofed in Great Britain to be their primary object, had only a fecondary influence. While they were charged with aiming at independence from the impulfe of avarice and ambition, they were ardently wifhing for a reconciliation. But, after they had been compelled to adopt that meafure, thefe powerful principles of human actions oppofed its retraction, and ftimulated to its fupport. That feparation which the Colonifts at firft dreaded as an evil, they foon gloried in as a national bleffing. While the rulers of Great Britain urged their people to a vigorous profecution of the American war, on the idea that the Colonifts were aiming at independence, they impofed on them a neceffity for adopting that very meafure, and actually effected its accomplifhment. By repeatedly charging the Americans with aiming at the erection of a new government, and by proceeding on that idea to fubdue them, predictions which were originally falfe, eventually became true. When the declaration of independence reached Great Britain the partifans of Miniftry triumphed in their fagacity. "The meafure," faid they, "we have long forefeen, is now come to pafs." They inverted the natural order of things, without reflecting that their own policy had forced a revolution contrary to the original defign of the Colonifts, the declaration of independence was held out to the people of Great Britain as a juftification of thofe previous violences, which were its efficient caufe. 1776.

The act of Congrefs for differvering the Colonies from their Parent State was the fubject of many animadverfions.

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1776. The Colonists were said to have been precipitate in adopting a measure, from which there was no honourable ground of retreating. They replied, that for eleven years they had been incessantly petitioning the throne for a redress of their grievances. Since the year 1765, a Continental Congress had at three sundry times stated their claims, and prayed for their constitutional rights. That each assembly of the thirteen Colonies had also, in its separate capacity, concurred in the same measure.—That from the perseverance of Great Britain in her schemes for their coercion, they had no alternative, but a mean submission or a vigorous resistance; and that as she was about to invade their coasts with a large body of mercenaries, they were compelled to declare themselves independent, that they might be put into an immediate capacity for soliciting foreign aid.

The virulence of those who had been in opposition to the claims of the Colonists, was increased by their bold acts in breaking off all subordination to the Parent State. "Great Britain," said they, "has founded Colonies at great expence—has incurred a load of debt by wars on their account—has protected their commerce, and raised them to all the consequence they possess, and now in the insolence of adult years, rather than pay their proportion of the common expences of government, they ungratefully renounce all connection with the nurse of their youth, and the protectress of their riper years." The Americans acknowledged that there was much due to Great Britain, for the protection which her navy procured to the coasts, and the commerce of the Colonies, but contended that much was paid by the latter, in consequence of the restrictions imposed on their commerce by the former. "The charge of ingratitude would have been just," said they, "had allegiance been renounced while protection was given, but when the navy, which formerly secured the commerce and sea-port towns of America, began to distress the former, and to burn the latter, the previous obligations to obey or be grateful, were no longer in force."

That the Colonists paid nothing, and would not pay to the support of government, was confidently asserted, and

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no credit was given for the ſums indirectly levied upon them, in conſequence of their being confined to the conſumption of Britiſh manufactures. By ſuch ill-founded obſervations were the people of Great Britain inflamed againſt their fellow-ſubjects in America. The latter were repreſented as an ungrateful people, refuſing to bear any part of the expences of a protecting government, or to pay their proportion of a heavy debt, ſaid to be incurred on their account. Many of the inhabitants of Great Britain, deceived in matters of fact, conſidered their American brethren as deſerving the ſeverity of military coercion. So ſtrongly were the two countries rivetted together, that if the whole truth had been known to the people of both, their ſeparation would have been ſcarcely poſſible. Any feaſible plan by which ſubjection to Great Britain could have been reconciled with American ſafety, would at any time, previous to 1776, have met the approbation of the Coloniſts. But while the luſt of power and of gain blinded the rulers of Great Britain, miſtated facts and uncandid repreſentations, brought over their people to ſecond the infatuation. A few honeſt men, properly authoriſed, might have deviſed meaſures of compromiſe, which under the influence of truth, humility, and moderation, would have prevented a diſmemberment of the empire; but theſe virtues ceaſed to influence, and falſehood, haughtineſs, and blind zeal, uſurped their places. Had Great Britain, even after the declaration of independence, adopted the magnanimous reſolution of declaring her Colonies free and independent ſtates, intereſt would have prompted them to form ſuch a connection as would have ſecured to the Mother Country the advantages of their commerce, without the expence or trouble of their governments. But miſguided politics continued the fatal ſyſtem of coercion and conqueſt. Several on both ſides of the Atlantic, have called the declaration of independence, "a bold, and accidentally, a lucky ſpeculation," but ſubſequent events proved, that it was a wiſe meaſure. It is acknowledged, that it detached ſome timid friends from ſupporting the Americans in their oppoſition to Great Britain, but it increaſed the

1776. vigour and union of thofe, who poffeffed more fortitude and perfeverance. Without it, the Coloniſts would have had no object adequate to the dangers to which they expofed themfelves, in continuing to contend with Great Britain. If the interference of France was neceffary to give fuccefs to the refiſtance of the Americans, the declaration of independence was alfo neceffary, for the French exprefsly founded the propriety of their treaty with Congrefs on the circumſtance, "that they found the United States in poffeffion of independence."

All political connection between Great Britain and her Colonies being diffolved, the inſtitution of new forms of government became unavoidable. The neceffity of this

May 15. was fo urgent, that Congrefs, before the declaration of independence, had recommended to the refpective affemblies and conventions of the United States, to adopt fuch governments as fhould, in their opinion, beſt conduce to the happinefs and fafety of their conſtituents. During more than twelve months the Coloniſts had been held together by the force of ancient habits, and by laws under the fimple ſtile of recommendations. The impropriety of proceeding in courts of juſtice by the authority of a fovereign, againſt whom the Colonies were in arms, was felf-evident. The impoffibility of governing, for any length of time, three millions of people, by the ties of honour, without the authority of law, was equally apparent. The rejection of Britiſh fovereignty therefore drew after it the neceffity of fixing on fome other principle of government. The genius of the Americans, their republican habits and fentiments, naturally led them to fubſtitute the majefty of the people, in lieu of difcarded royalty. The kingly office was dropped, but in moſt of the fubordinate departments of government, ancient forms and names were retained. Such a portion of power had at all times been exercifed by the people and their reprefentatives, that the change of fovereignty was hardly perceptible, and the revolution took place without violence or convulfion. Popular elections elevated private citizens to the fame offices, which formerly had been conferred by royal appointment. The people felt an uninterrupted continuation of the blef-

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ſings of law and government under old names, though derived from a new ſovereignty, and were ſcarcely ſenſible of any change in their political conſtitution. The checks and balances which reſtrained the popular aſſemblies under the royal government, were partly dropped and partly retained, by ſubſtituting ſomething of the ſame kind. The temper of the people would not permit that any one man, however exalted by office, or diſtinguiſhed by abilities, ſhould have a negative on the declared ſenſe of a majority of their repreſentatives, but the experience of all ages had taught them the danger of lodging all power in one body of men. A ſecond branch of legiſlature, conſiſting of a few ſelect perſons, under the name of ſenate, or council, was therefore conſtituted in eleven of the Thirteen States, and their concurrence made neceſſary to give the validity of law to the acts of a more numerous branch of popular repreſentatives. New-York and Maſſachuſetts went one ſtep farther. The former conſtituted a council of reviſion, conſiſting of the governor and the heads of judicial departments, on whoſe objecting to any propoſed law, a reconſideration became neceſſary, and unleſs it was confirmed by two-thirds of both houſes it could have no operation. A ſimilar power was given to the Governor of Maſſachuſetts: Georgia and Pennſylvania were the only ſtates whoſe legiſlature conſiſted of only one branch. Though many in theſe ſtates, and a majority in all the others, ſaw and acknowledged the propriety of a compounded legiſlature, yet the mode of creating two branches out of a homogeneous maſs of peeple, was a matter of difficulty. No diſtinction of ranks exiſted in the Colonies, and none were entitled to any rights, but ſuch as were common to all. Some poſſeſſed more wealth than others, but riches and ability were not always aſſociated. Ten of the eleven States, whoſe legiſlatures conſiſted of two branches, ordained that the members of both ſhould be elected by the people. This rather made two co-ordinate houſes of repreſentatives than a check on a ſingle one, by the moderation of a ſelect few. Maryland adopted a ſingular plan for conſtituting an independent ſenate. By her conſtitution the members of that body were

1776.

1776. were elected for five years, while the members of the House of Delegates held their seats only for one. The number of senators was only fifteen, and they were all elected indiscriminately from the inhabitants of any part of the state, excepting that nine of them were to be residents on the west, and six on the east side of the Chesapeak Bay. They were elected not immediately by the people, but by electors, two from each county, appointed by the inhabitants for that sole purpose. By these regulations the senate of Maryland consisted of men of influence, integrity, and abilities, and such as were a real and beneficial check on the hasty proceedings of a more numerous branch of popular representatives. The laws of that state were well digested, and its interests steadily pursued with a peculiar unity of system; while elsewhere it too often happened in the fluctuation of public assemblies, and where the legislative department was not sufficiently checked, that passion and party predominated over principle and public good.

Pennsylvania, instead of a legislative council or senate, adopted the expedient of publishing bills after the second reading, for the information of the inhabitants. This had its advantages and disadvantages. It prevented the precipitate adoption of new regulations, and gave an opportunity of ascertaining the sense of the people on those laws by which they were to be bound: but it carried the spirit of discussion into every corner, and disturbed the peace and harmony of neighbourhoods. By making the business of government the duty of every man, it drew off the attention of many from the steady pursuit of their respective businesses.

The state of Pennsylvania also adopted another constitution peculiar to itself, under the denomination of a council of censors. These were to be chosen once every seven years, and were authorised to inquire whether the constitution had been preserved—whether the legislative and executive branch of government had performed their duty, or assumed to themselves, or exercised other or greater powers than those to which they were constitutionally entitled. To inquire whether the public taxes had been

been juſtly laid and collected, and in what manner the public monies had been diſpoſed of, and whether the laws had been duly executed. However excellent this inſtitution may appear in theory, it is doubtful whether in practice it will anſwer any valuable end. It moſt certainly opens a door for diſcord, and furniſhes abundant matter for periodical altercation. Either from the diſpoſition of its inhabitants, its form of government, or ſome other cauſe, the people of Pennſylvania have conſtantly been in a ſtate of fermentation. The end of one public controverſy has been the beginning of another. From the colliſion of parties, the minds of the citizens were ſharpened, and their active powers improved, but internal harmony has been unknown. Thoſe who were out of place ſo narrowly watched thoſe who were in, that nothing injurious to the public could be eaſily effected, but from the fluctuation of power, and the total want of permanent ſyſtem, nothing great or laſting could with ſafety be undertaken, or proſecuted to effect. Under all theſe diſadvantages the ſtate flouriſhed, and from the induſtry and ingenuity of its inhabitants, acquired an unrivalled aſcendency in arts and manufactures. This muſt in a great meaſure be aſcribed to the influence of habits, of order, and induſtry, that had long prevailed.

The Americans agreed in appointing a ſupreme executive head to each ſtate, with the title either of governor or preſident. They alſo agreed in deriving the whole powers of government, either mediately or immediately, from the people. In the eaſtern ſtates, and in New-York, their governors were elected by the inhabitants, in their reſpective towns or counties, and in the other ſtates by the legiſlatures: but in no caſe was the ſmalleſt tittle of power exerciſed from hereditary right. New-York was the only ſtate which inveſted its governor with executive authority without a council. Such was the extreme jealouſy of power which pervaded the American States, that they did not think proper to truſt the man of their choice with the power of executing their own determinations, without obliging him in many caſes to take the advice of ſuch counſellors as they thought proper to nominate.

1776. minate. The disadvantages of the institution far outweighed its advantages: had the governors succeeded by hereditary right, a council would have been often necessary to supply the real want of abilities, but when an individual had been selected by the people as the fittest person for discharging the duties of this high department, to fetter him with a council was either to lessen his capacity of doing good, or to furnish him with a skreen for doing evil. It destroyed the secresy, vigour, and dispatch, which the executive power ought to possess, and by making government acts the acts of a body, diminished individual responsibility. In some states it greatly enhanced the expences of government, and in all, retarded its operations without any equivalent advantages.

New-York, in another particular, displayed political sagacity superior to her neighbours. This was in her council of appointment, consisting of one senator from each of her four great election districts, authorised to designate proper persons for filling vacancies in the executive departments of government. Large bodies are far from being the most proper depositaries of the power of appointing to offices. The assiduous attention of candidates is too apt to bias the voice of individuals in popular assemblies. Besides, in such appointments, the responsibility for the conduct of the officer is in a great measure annihilated. The concurrence of a select few on the nomination of one, seems a more eligible mode for securing a proper choice, than appointments made either by one, or by a numerous body. In the former case there would be danger of favoritism; in the latter, a modest, unassuming merit would be overlooked, in favour of the forward and obsequious.

A rotation of public officers made a part of most of the American constitutions. Frequent elections were required by all, but several proceeded still farther, and deprived the electors of the power of continuing the same office in the same hands, after a specified length of time. Young politicians suddenly called from the ordinary walks of life, to make laws and institute forms of government, turned their attention to the histories of ancient republics

lies and the writings of ſpeculative men on the ſubject of government. This led them into many errors, and occaſioned them to adopt ſundry opinions, unſuitable to the ſtate of ſociety in America, and contrary to the genius of real republicaniſm. 1776.

The principle of rotation was carried ſo far, that in ſome of the States, public officers in ſeveral departments ſcarcely knew their official duty, till they were obliged to retire and give place to others, as ignorant as they had been on their firſt appointment. If offices had been inſtituted for the benefit of the holders, the policy of diffuſing theſe benefits would have been proper, but inſtituted as they were for the convenience of the public, the end was marred by ſuch frequent changes. By confining the objects of choice, it diminiſhed the privileges of electors, and frequently deprived them of the liberty of chooſing the man who, from previous experience, was of all men the moſt ſuitable. The favourers of this ſyſtem of rotation contended for it, as likely to prevent a perpetuity of office and power in the ſame individual or family, and as a ſecurity againſt hereditary honours. To this it was replied, that free, fair, and frequent elections were the moſt natural and proper ſecurities for the liberties of the people. It produced a more general diffuſion of political knowledge, but made more ſmatterers than adepts in the ſcience of government.

As a farther ſecurity for the continuance of republican principles in the American conſtitution, they agreed in prohibiting all hereditary honours and diſtinction of ranks.

It was one of the peculiarities of theſe new forms of government, that all religious eſtabliſhments were aboliſhed. Some retained a conſtitutional diſtinction between Chriſtians and others, with reſpect to eligibility to office, but the idea of ſupporting one denomination at the expence of others, or of raiſing any one ſect of Proteſtants to a legal pre-eminence, was univerſally reprobated. The alliance between church and ſtate was completely broken, and each was left to ſupport itſelf, independent of the other.

The far-famed ſocial compact between the people and their rulers did not apply to the United States. The

1776. ſovereignty was in the people. In their ſovereign capacity by their repreſentatives, they agreed on forms of government for their own ſecurity, and deputed certain individuals as their agents to ſerve them in public ſtations, agreeably to conſtitutions which they preſcribed for their conduct.

The world has not hitherto exhibited ſo fair an opportunity for promoting ſocial happineſs. It is hoped for the honour of human nature, that the reſult will prove the fallacy of thoſe theories, which ſuppoſe that mankind are incapable of ſelf-government. The ancients, not knowing the doctrine of repreſentation, were apt in their public meetings to run into confuſion, but in America, this mode of taking the ſenſe of the people is ſo well underſtood, and ſo completely reduced to ſyſtem, that its moſt populous ſtates are often peaceably convened in an aſſembly of deputies, not too large for orderly deliberation, and yet repreſenting the whole in equal proportions. Theſe popular branches of legiſlature are miniature pictures of the community, and from the mode of their election are likely to be influenced by the ſame intereſts and feelings with the people whom they repreſent. As a farther ſecurity for their fidelity, they are bound by every law they make for their conſtituents. The aſſemblage of theſe circumſtances gives as great a ſecurity that laws will be made, and government adminiſtered for the good of the people, as can be expected from the imperfection of human inſtitutions.

In this ſhort view of the formation and eſtabliſhment of the American conſtitutions, we behold our ſpecies in a new ſituation. In no age before, and in no other country, did man ever poſſeſs an election of the kind of government under which he would chooſe to live. The conſtituent parts of the ancient free governments were thrown together by accident. The freedom of modern European governments was, for the moſt part, obtained by the conceſſions, or liberality of monarchs, or military leaders. In America alone, reaſon and liberty concurred in the formation of conſtitutions. It is true, from the infancy of political knowledge in the United States, there were

many defects in their forms of government; but in one thing they were all perfect. They left the people in the power of altering and amending them, whenever they pleased. In this happy peculiarity they placed the science of politics on a footing with the other sciences, by opening it to improvements from experience, and the discoveries of future ages. By means of this power of amending American constitutions, the friends of mankind have fondly hoped that oppression will one day be no more, and that political evil will at least be prevented or restrained with as much certainty, by a proper combination or separation of power, as natural evil is lessened or prevented by the application of the knowledge or ingenuity of man to domestic purposes. No part of the history of ancient or modern Europe can furnish a single fact that militates against this opinion, since in none of its governments have the principles of equal representation and checks been applied for the preservation of freedom. On these two pivots are suspended the liberties of most of the States. Where they are wanting, there can be no security for liberty, where they exist they render any farther security unnecessary. 1776.

The rejection of British sovereignty not only involved a necessity of erecting independent constitutions, but of cementing the whole United States by some common bond of union. The act of independence did not hold out to the world thirteen sovereign States, but a common sovereignty of the whole in their united capacity. It therefore became necessary to run the line of distinction between the local legislatures and the assembly of the States in Congress. A committee was appointed for digesting articles of confederation between the States or United Colonies, as they were then called, at the time the propriety of declaring independence was under debate, and some weeks previously to the adoption of that measure, but the plan was not for sixteen months after so far digested, as to be ready for communication to the States. Nor was it finally ratified by the accession of all the States, till nearly three years more had elapsed. In discussing its articles, many difficult questions occurred. One was to ascertain the ratio of

1776. contributions from each State. Two principles presented themselves, numbers of people, and the value of lands. The last was preferred, as being the truest barometer of the wealth of nations; but from an apprehended impracticability of carrying it into effect, it was soon relinquished, and recurrence had to the former; that the States should be represented in proportion to their importance, was contended for by those who had extensive territory, but they who were confined to small dimensions replied, that the States confederated as individuals in a state of nature, and should therefore have equal votes. From fear of weakening their exertions against the common enemy, the large States for the present yielded the point, and consented that each State should have an equal suffrage.

It was not easy to define the power of the State legislatures, so as to prevent a clashing between their jurisdiction and that of the general government. On mature deliberation it was thought proper, that the former should be abridged of the power of forming any other confederation or alliance—of laying on any imposts or duties that might interfere with treaties made by Congress—or keeping up any vessels of war, or granting letters of marque or reprisals. The powers of Congress were also defined. Of these the principle were as follows: to have the sole and exclusive right of determining on peace and war—of sending and receiving ambassadors—of entering into treaties and alliances—of granting letters of marque and reprisals in times of peace—to be the last resort on appeal in all disputes between two or more States—to have the sole and exclusive right of regulating the alloy and value of coin—of fixing the standard of weights and measures—regulating the trade and managing all affairs with the Indians—establishing and regulating post-offices—to borrow money or emit bills on the credit of the United States—to build and equip a navy—to agree upon the number of land forces, and to make requisitions from each State for its quota of men, in proportion to the number of its white inhabitants.

No coercive power was given to the general government, nor was it invested with any legislative power over indi-

individuals, but only over States in their corporate capacity. 1776.
As at the time the articles of confederation were propofed for ratification, the Americans had little or no regular commercial intercourfe with foreign nations, a power to regulate trade or to raife a revenue from it, though both were effential to the welfare of the union, made no part of the federal fyftem. To remedy this and all other defects, a door was left open for introducing farther provifions, fuited to future circumftances.

The articles of confederation were propofed at a time when the citizens of America were young in the fcience of politics, and when a commanding fenfe of duty, enforced by the preffure of a common danger, precluded the neceffity of a power of compulfion. The enthufiafm of the day gave fuch credit and currency to paper emiffions, as made the raifing of fupplies an eafy matter. The fyftem of federal government was therefore more calculated for what men then were, under thefe circumftances, than for the languid years of peace, when felfifhnefs ufurped the place of public fpirit, and when credit no longer affifted in providing for the exigencies of government.

The experience of a few years after the termination of the war, proved, as will appear in its proper place, that a radical change of the whole fyftem was neceffary to the good government of the United States.

THE END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.